

WITHDRAWN

7

THE BOOK OF POETRY

AMERICAN POETS

PAGES 1 TO 282

THE BOOK OF POETRY

Collected from the Whole Field
of British and American Poetry.
Also Translations of Important
Poems from Foreign Languages.

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Selected and Annotated
with an Introduction by
EDWIN MARKHAM

*Poetry fettered,
fetters the human race.*
—William Blake.

VOLUME I

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The poet is one who "inscribes things unapparent in apparent fabrications."

—Zoroaster

"The purpose of the artist [poet] is to complete the incomplete designs of nature."

—Aristotle

"The origin of poetry lies in a thirst for a wilder beauty than earth supplies."

—Edgar Allan Poe

"Poetry is that impassioned arrangement of words (whether in verse or prose) which embodies the exaltation, the beauty, the rhythm, and the pathetic truth of life."

—Richard Le Gallienne

"Poetry is the expression—under the light of the imagination—of the unfamiliar beauty of the world, the beauty that is 'the smile upon the face of truth'. Poetry is the revelation of the strange in the familiar, of the eternal in the transitory. It is the impassioned cry of the heart in the presence of the wonder of life."

—Edwin Markham

INTRODUCTION

Brief Glance at Poetry—its Nature, Use and History

CERTAIN critics are saying that poetry is doomed to perish, to be sponged out by the hand of science. As well say that poetry will obliterate science, each stands on its own ground, separate and secure, equal, eternal, like Jungfrau and Matterhorn. Others, again, are saying that the world of poetry has been exhausted by the poets themselves—that nothing is left to see or to say. But these, too, are idle words. When Homer had given Troy to flame and immortality, no doubt there were those who said, "Poetry can go farther go." But after Homer was Æschylus, who came with gorgeous tragedy and sceptered pall; Dante, who journeyed the laborious way from the Infernal Pit to the Rose of the Blessed; Shakespeare, who disported to us the long, sad, glad, mad procession of humanity.

And who shall say that a fellow of these, if not a later, shall not yet appear? Humanity is infinite, nature inexhaustible; the world is still young, wonder-unfathomable. In spite of the searchlight of science, it is still veiled in immense mystery. Who has uttered the secret of the sea, all the confidences of the stately, megal woods? Who has given us all the youth and tender of the morning? Who has pillaged all the evening beauty of the sunset? And has not the heart of man grown yet deeper, more unsearchable, with the process of the suns? Shall poetry perish? No; we have as yet but the first few golden syllables of the inexhaustible Song of Life—the song out of whose mighty text the universe arose.

But who is the poet, the man who comes speak some syllable of this mighty song? Certainly he is a mere molder of golden meters and sugared rhyme "a pleader of lovely and pleasant causes, nothing perilous." No; if he is a poet worth while he enters with serious steps the chambers and gardens of the Muses. In his loftier moods, his words may well be said to be oracular. He is frequently a voice of protest and of prophecy. In the youth of the world he has appeared to his people as the impassioned seer. Religion in the Vedas, the Eddas, the Scriptures, descended as song, as a poetic vision of the Creative Man.

How far away from this august ideal of the poet is that cheap conception of him as a dexterous *dilettante*, a dainty ornament of the drawing-room, a picturesque lounge in a tavern, a dreamy idler mooning on a bank of violets. Yes; in his true function, he is one of the substantial forces in the world-movement, essential to the growth and glory of a people. These men of earth—buried in grim commercialism—are usually poetically poor, in heroic emotions, in daring conjecture, in splendid dreams, in spiritual inlookings; so the poet (touched by some God) has the power to give men the rich and varied treasure, something immortal and starry.

Of course, it is not alone this lofty bard for whom there is need and place. There is room also for the homely near-by poet, with his humbler ministries—for the wren that nests near the ground, as for the skylark that soars upward to dwell an immortal moment in the ecstatic "privacies of light."

So delicate, so daring, so elusive a craftsman as the poet can be described only imperfectly, and then only by the use of many changing metaphors. The poet is

er between two worlds, the Seen and the Unseen; he beholds objects and events in their larger outline deeper mystery. He never rests with the sensual, apparent. He frees us from the tyranny of the present. His mission is an eternal quest for the absolute reality and veracity behind the veil of the senses. Fact needs the Ideal to give it genuine reality, as body needs the soul. The ideal completes the fact, giving to it a new and larger significance. The fact is always a liar: it needs to be rounded into full truth, for fact is only part of truth. The poet's device is a deep saying written upon an ancient page: "We are not at the things which are seen and temporal, but at the things which are not seen and eternal."

To the poet, then, the world is not substance but soul. Therefore, he is ever pressing on through the surface of things to the significant, the permanent, the universal behind them. He trafficks in the eternal reality. He ignores the mere shell and gives the spirit and splendor.

Hence his report is deeper than science and truer than history. Consider the difference between the poet and the historian. A page of Homer frequently gives us a deeper insight into Greek life than do a hundred pages of Herodotus. A canto of Dante gives us more of the heart of the "ten silent centuries" than do long chapters of Hume. Symonds offers us many volumes on the Renaissance; but some brief monologue of Browning—*The Bishop Orders his Tomb*—will give us more of the real essence, its spiritual aspiration, its clogging materiality. "Of all the writers under the sun," says Philip Sydney, "the poet is the least a liar!"

It is indeed good fortune for us that the poet comes with power to open paths for our feet into the lofty

places of the Ideal. For by these paths we escape from the hard monotony of our daily lives, from the i despotism of the actual. Indeed, the ideal is more r and urgent than the fact, more essential to the needs the soul. And the ideal must be preserved, even at cost of martyrdom. When it perishes, the home shrivel to a house, the grave to a pit, the nation to rabble. The poet's work, then, pulsing as it does w the ideal, is as practical as seed-sowing and hou building. What Novalis says of philosophy can be plied to poetry: "She can bake no bread, but she procure for us God, freedom, and immortality!"

So the poet, dwelling on exalted heights, comes judge the world as it is, in the light of the world as ought to be; comes to infuse into the hearts of men a lofty courage of life; to create for their consolation a joy that nobler, "wilder beauty than earth supplies. Hence he gives us his *Tintern Abbey*, his *Oberma Once More*, his *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, his *Men of Engla*, his *Locksley Hall*, his *The Voice of Toil*, his *Eve Revolution*, his *Eye-Witness*, his *The Eagle Forgott*—poems that face the tragic facts of life, and yet h to fortify the spiritual forces of the world. The po is forever chastening our souls with a strange beau forever disturbing our easy optimism with a bugle battle. He sends a noble discontent—a divine impatient—the impatience of the acorn to be an oak. Into t world of the Imperfect he sends not peace but a swo—a sword bathed in heaven. He points away from t ephemeral concerns to the eternal concerns, thund his averments that to be something is more than to g something; that to make a life is more than to make living; that the demands of love and honor are t highest interests of practical men. I try, in these f lines of mine, to picture the poet seen in his high p phetic office:

His home is on the heights: to him
Men wage a battle weird and dim,
Life is a mission stern as fate,
And Song a dread apostolate.
The toils of prophecy are his,
To hail the coming centuries—
To ease the steps and lift the load
Of souls that falter on the road.
The perilous music that he hears
Falls from the vortex of the spheres

He presses on before the race,
And sings out of a silent place.
Like faint notes of a forest bird
On heights afar that voice is heard;
And the dim path he breaks to-day
Will sometime be a trodden way.
But when the race comes toiling on
That voice of wonder will be gone—
Be heard on higher peaks afar,
Moved upward with the morning star.

O men of earth, that wandering voice
Still goes the upward way: rejoice!

III

But how is a poem to be judged? In two ways—by its
at lines and by its total impression.
and how can we train ourselves to detect poetry—how
n to discriminate between noble utterance and melo-
us doggerel? In the same way that we learn to dis-
nate between good bread and poor bread—by eating
d bread until we have established a strong liking
good bread. We can learn to detect great poetry by

forming a taste for it. To this end, we will do to keep in mind some of the great lines. These quicken our taste, and serve as a test when dealing with other poetry. Here are a few lines of this high order

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?

I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of death.

The horse that guide the golden eye of heaven,
And blow the morning from their nostrils.

A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.

We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

That's the wise thrush: he sings each song twice over
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!

IV

I have said that poetry will persist—that it is imperishable. What is the testimony of history?

In the childhood of our civilization, poetry was the currency of thought. The history of a mighty people—the Jews—was molded by its prophet-poets of burning eloquence. Of another people, the Greeks, “children

antiquity," the tradition of a thousand incomparable
containing the record of the awakening of man, is
and in the epics of Homer and in the poetic dramas
Æschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. In Homer is
naïve perception of the nobility of every common
and the sense of the heroic in life embodied in
form of "radiantly living persons." Æschylus
gigantic man," Carlyle calls him) proclaims the
of law in the cosmos: Sophocles disturbs us with
sense of the irony of life's ebb and flow: Euripides
dives to the core of passion and pity in human hearts.
of the Romans, "men of antiquity," poetry remains a
ument. The *Æneid* of Virgil, saturated with senti-
t, will be loved as long as there are tears in mortal
gs. The poems of Horace preserve forever the
er and polish of the urbane: Catullus still lives in
hin thrill of passionate lyricism: Lucretius, devoting
life to his poem *On the Nature of Things*, pictures
sum of experience as a rational harmony.

the Dark Ages came. In the enormous night of a
sand years, one poet of Italy lifted a dim smoking
h among the damned, climbed the desperate moun-
of Purgatory, and revealed for golden moments the
e of the Blessed. Dante! he is the voice of the
dle Ages. His *Divine Comedy* is a sharp realism
by side with visions of incandescent imagery.
nglish poetry has its true spring in Provence with
troubadours of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.
there had been an earlier strain in Britain, the
lo-Saxon bards before and after the Christianizing
the island. Of this poetry, *Beowulf*, an epic of
oes and dragons, reminds us of barbaric splendors
the dark fatalism of our Germanic ancestors.
Geoffrey Chaucer, then, "learned" Chaucer, was the
great poet of England, one shrewd and humorous

in his estimates of mankind, one gently skeptical, smacking of green earth and genial sun. He "belongs to those poets for whom the actual, sweating, visible world is sufficient"; that he, on the other hand, was sufficient for it, may be inferred from Dryden's complete command upon him: "Here is God's bounty." Chaucer "knew life and loved it, and his specialty was mankind as it was, and is." He was, moreover, the master-builder of English speech, and after his death there was no one advanced enough to carry on his work. The very pattern of his verse was lost and had to be recovered gradually.

The Renaissance in England flowered later than in most other countries of Europe. To the great age of Elizabeth we must look to find the sudden blossoming of the creative in many forms of literature. Edmund Spenser, "the poet's poet," of "rare and exhaustless art" was foremost among those who reflected the new chivalry of an England roused by the Renaissance and sobered by the Reformation. Although his *Faerie Queene* is an allegory, it (in the words of Hazlitt) "doesn't bite." This romantic epic was designed to nerve men to chivalrous aims.

Shakespeare's universality of sympathies, his unconscious depths of thought, his magnificence and delicacy of expression, mark him as the supreme poet of his race, perhaps of all races.

About Spenser and Shakespeare cluster groups of lesser geniuses. That furious spirit, Christopher Marlowe, had he lived longer, might be sharing with them the master the summit of England's Helicon. Of Marlowe full of "brave, translunary things," "a boy in years, a man in genius, a God in ambition," it has been said that his personality had the wild and sudden beauty of a falling star. His soul's battle-cry was in these stormy lines:

Come, let us march against the powers of Heaven
And set black streamers in the firmament
To signify the slaughter of the Gods."

V

Flying, as we must, over half a hundred years, we do no more than remind ourselves in passing of the poets of the seventeenth century, naming only Robert Herrick, who would have his simple, joyous lyrics read, when men have both well drunk and fed . . . and with laurel spirits i' the fire."

The "period" of the Puritans sweeps in the score of years both before and after Cromwell. The struggle between the religious passion of the Puritan and the determined worldliness of the Cavalier destroyed the careless Elizabethan rapture. In one man was united the best of this age in both sensuous grace and sublimed earnestness—John Milton, who stood Titanic and alone, next to Shakespeare the most impressive figure in English literature. His style soars like an eagle. But the Cavaliers referred to him as "that blind adder that stings his venom on the King's person." Yet soon he was known to all men as the mighty orb of song!

We skim another century, noting the rise and fall of pseudo-classicism. John Dryden, unsurpassed in breadth of craftsmanship, we leave behind. Alexander Pope, of unrealized romantic promise, dictator for a generation in his literary world, we note in his place as the master of the pithy couplet. Blake we observe, going his own way through an age which could not comprehend his greatness. "What he thought, he *saw*." Burns, compact of mire and romance and laughing flame, sings past unconscious of his kinship to the new romantic poetry and the rising revolutionary spirit of the age.

The early dawn of the nineteenth century heard an explosion that shook all nations to the four corners of the world. The blaze of its ascending flame lighted the heavens. It was the French Revolution, a terrific proclamation of human rights, the protest of the plundered people, a flaming thunder of indignation against the shames and cruelties of a supercilious kingcraft and aristocracy. It was "truth clad in hell-fire."

This explosion seems to have stirred the hearts of the lyric Pleiad—Burns, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Scott and Byron—opening the gates of the Romantic Age with a mighty thunder of song. Stirred by the bugles of the Revolution, they shook themselves free of the bonds of literary tradition. Here was the sudden burst of a day whose coming had been gradual. These poets yielded no longer to the hackneyed phraseology of earlier epochs. Wordsworth would cast off the old grandiose words and return to the speech of common life. With one consent the Pleiad renounced the canons of authority and conformity.

Scott, the least of these, gained resounding popular triumph, with his *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and won recognition in some measure for the greater poets with the new spirit of revolt. This revolt had different aspects in different men. Keats "surrounded himself with all Olympus's hierarchy, and breathed the freshness of Thessalian forest-winds." Coleridge (whose early years were lighted with dreams of a nobler social order) soon passed as undisputed master into a realm of weird beauty and haunting melody.

But a greater revolution went on in the souls of other members of the Pleiad. They blazed with a passion for human liberty: they cut loose from the glorification of the privileged classes and turned to the defense of the millions who were loaded with

"Wrongs unredressed
And insults unavenged and unavengable."

ron, a "whirling gulf of fantasy and flame," became voice for human rights. And in Shelley we find a man at once "all doctrine and all poetry"; his writing seemed "the aureole of a strayed visitor from some translunary sphere." His cry for justice rose to the clouds in *Men of England*:

"Men of England wherefore plow
For the lords that lay ye low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?"

Now roared in a later era full of battle-cries and loud arms and great achievements. One poet stood aloft in this Victorian Age—Alfred Tennyson. His message of the majesty of Law:

"That God which ever lives and loves,
One God, one Law, one Element,
And one far-off divine event
Toward which the whole creation moves."

Carlyle spoke of Tennyson as "carrying a bit of Chaos out with him . . . which he is manufacturing into Cosmos." Tennyson, alas, had an easy optimism. Robert Browning, also, had the "profound conviction that the system of things is all right, that we can trust to the end." But "a man's reach must exceed his grasp, else what's a Heaven for?" His message is the primacy and dominion of Spirit. In Matthew Arnold we find the third poet to place beside these two Victorians as the voices of their time.

Arnold's passion was "of the brain," but he wrote few poems which will be read as long as there are pathos and beauty and immortal longing in the world: *Dover Beach*, *The Forsaken Merman*, and the rest.

We will not pause in our swift flight to speak of Swinburne and Rossetti—each of whom has his moment of immortality.

VI

There have been two great eras in poetic America—the Emerson Era and the Whitman Era. The Emerson Era swept in the nineteenth century down to the Civil War: then the Whitman Era began, an era still on the way.

The Emerson circle, confined to New England, was chiefly a circle of scholars, enchanted by the old traditions and the European literary ideals. One woman had her place here—Emily Dickinson, recluse yet starranger, a spy upon Eternity. Poe also is in this era, the tragic and lonely one whom I picture in *Our Israfel*:

He walked our streets as on a lonely strand:
His country was not here—it was afar.
Not here his home, not here his motherland,
But in some statelier star.

Life was his exile, Earth his alien shore,
And these were foreign faces that he passed.

But Emerson was the summit soaring above them all. He began his service with a fine fire, a social passion. He grafted the wisdom of antiquity upon the brooding Puritan spirit, opening new vistas for the people. His pages glitter with epigram. They may lack logical

ence, they may be a chaos; but it is a chaos sprinkled with shooting stars. He was our major prophet, called to preside over a new land opening toward a new time. He is our greatest American. Yet in his later years a mist seemed to fall upon the enthusiasms of his spirit; and he appeared to lose interest in the labor and sorrow of the people.

While all these poets of the Emersonian circle had affiliations with the past, still they had their faces to the future and stood for the freeing of the slave and the freeing of the mind from the old religious fears. Even in the light of their time, these men were radicals. But Whitman (a good poet but a bad philosopher) set off his era with a larger and a more lawless radicalism. He was, in America, the pioneer of the New Poetry. He is the Niagara among our poets—unique in magnitude, in seminal energy, in thunderous and spectacular manifestation. Excepting Whittier, he is the only one of the elder circle of American poets not college-bred and library-fed.

Bryant, our first great American singer, lit his torch at Wordsworth's hearth, and gave us his serene and ordered view of our fields and forests, coupled with his stern Puritan counsel. Longfellow helped to bring to us the flavor of the old world, the culture that lifted us to the level of scholarly Europe. Lowell gave us the stately Yankee, echoing the shrewd sense and straight virtue of Pilgrim firesides and Pilgrim pulpits. Whittier brought up the farm hands at humble home-making, and carried a fierce sense of justice for white man and black. Poe left the bitter struggle of the street and the risk to follow beauty vanished and beauty unattainable to sing of the evanescent, the irreparable, the heart-breaking of the Nevermore.

Whitman determined to have nothing of these themes,

nothing of the past. A huge concept surged into his brain—to express the Democracy of America, to bod forth the average American evolving in these States, the product of America's far-flung hills and plains, the composite of her amalgamated races, her myriad ambitions, her multitudinous industries.

In a poem called *Song of Myself*, Whitman sets forth his whole philosophy, and touches off the train of powder in these opening words:

"I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you

I loaf and invite my soul,
I lean and loaf at my ease observing a spear of grass."

After the Civil War, after the broadening of the country toward the West, our poetry took on a new and freer aspect, as in the poems of Whitcomb Riley, Joaquin Miller and Hamlin Garland. But after the turn of the twentieth century, the New Verse sprang through the hoop and lighted confidently in the saddle. It attracted the eyes of the world. Shop and studio and street began to discuss poetry with militant interest. It became the live theme of the hour.

The Free Verse poets claim the right to break with tradition in line, rhythm and cadence. But the inner circle, the Imagists, demand not only this liberation in prosody, but also the use of modern diction, the use of the sharp image, the sharp word, and the hard, clear style. They insist on stripping the poem bare of every needless word, also of every ornament not essential to the idea. They cry war against the eloquent, and death to the *cliché*.

let me remark, by the way, that Robert Underwood
Johnson, in his Academy Essay, *The Glory of Words*,
Alfred Noyes in his volume, *Some Aspects of*
Modern Poetry, offer us enlightened discussion of these
difficult problems. They seem to stand on solid ground.
To my mind these demands of the New Verse group
appear, in the main, to be justified; but many of these
demands have been the working principles of the great
poets from the beginning. However, the apostles of the
New Verse are entitled to our gratitude for having
revived these principles, and for having urged them with
much vigor upon the attention of the world.

My chief objection to these new-verse apostles lies
in the fact that they reject introspection, reject all con-
sideration of the inner spiritual values, and confine them-
selves to the naked image. Another objection is that
Imagist writers are frequently satisfied with the
bare bones of expression—mystery is ignored, beauty is
forgotten.

And now what ground have we reached in this hasty
condemnation of British and American poetry? My
final contention seems to be established by the logic
of history—the contention that poetry will not perish.
It seems that man has in him the eternal spring of
poetry, an eternal longing for the stars. Yes, it appears
that down all the coming centuries poetry will rise, again
and again, in new vigor and valor in the unceasing effort
of man to express the unveiled mystery of life and the
veiled mystery of death.

EDWIN MARKHAM.

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New York.

AN AVOWAL, WITH ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Perhaps a thousand times, students and others have asked me to name the poems that have delighted me and influenced my work. So I have long had it in my head to collect these poems for my friends—poems that powerfully impressed my early years, reinforced by the poems that have delighted my later years.

I wished to include poems not merely for their historical significance. Pillars of poetry were what I wanted—not mere sign-posts. The poets of both hemispheres have been most generous in their cooperation. My lyings blessing on them all!

I was at work upon this collection when, by good fortune, a courageous publisher—William H. Wise of New York City—heard of my project and offered to give it wings. I am grateful to Mr. Wise for his ready cooperation and long patience.

I had gotten well under way with my task when, at a crisis, William Griffith—poet and bookman—came to my help. I wing my hearty thanks to him for his expert advice and skilled assistance. He made possible the early printing of these volumes.

My thanks go also to Anna Catherine Markham, secretary of The Poetry Society of America, for her assistance all along the way. She brought to the work her wide knowledge of poets and poetry—new and old.

Two other associates are caught into the gale of my gratitude. I refer to Mary Sheila Murphy of California, who helped with skilful tabulations and in other ways; and Leonora Mackay, to whom I am greatly indebted for secretarial and other valuable assistance.

Lastly, my fatherly gratitude reaches out to Virginia Markham, scholar and novelist (*The Scamp*: Macmillan, 1926) who rendered important service in connection with the Introduction.

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America for Me	
NATHAN HASKELL DOLE	
Man's Hidden Side	
CHARLES ERSKINE SCOTT WOOD	
The Desert	
When I Walk Alone	
The Mammon Monster	
Sweat-Shop Slaves	
The Devil's Auction	
EDWIN MARKHAM	
Child of My Heart	
Lincoln, the Man of the People	
Outwitted	
The Man with the Hoe	
Virgilia	
IRWIN RUSSELL	
De Fust Banjo	
JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY	
A Life-Lesson	
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Love in Italy	
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Browning at 'Asolo	

AMERICAN POETS

FROM 1752

TO 1853

PHILIP FRENEAU

1752—1832

ne verses of Freneau may be found more literary spirit, if not Promethean fire, than in any other metrical positions produced in America before the nineteenth y. Indeed, Freneau deserves to rank as the first real ican poet. His *Wild Honeysuckle* is our "first stam- of poetry." He was known as the Poet of the Revo- : much of his verse was kindled by British oppression blown by Freneau to a white heat. He died by ent in a swampy meadow at eighty years of age. ew fine lyrics—*To a Honey Bee, The Parting Glass, Wild Honeysuckle*—comprise the highest flights of the in America one-hundred years ago.

The Wild Honeysuckle

F AIR flower, that dost so comely grow,
Hid in this silent, dull retreat,
Untouched thy honied blossoms blow,
Unseen thy little branches greet:
No roving foot shall crush thee here,
No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white arrayed,
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
And planted here the guardian shade,
And sent soft waters murmuring by;
Thus quietly thy summer goes,
Thy days declining to repose.

PHILIP FRENEAU

Smit with those charms, that must decay,
I grieve to see your future doom;
They died—nor were those flowers more gay,
The flowers that did in Eden bloom;
Unpitying frosts and Autumn's power
Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dews
At first thy little being came;
If nothing once, you nothing lose,
For when you die you are the same;
The space between is but an hour,
The frail duration of a flower.

To a Honey Bee

THOU, born to sip the lake or spring,
Or quaff the waters of the stream,
Why hither come, on vagrant wing?
Does Bacchus tempting seem—
Did he for you this glass prepare?
Will I admit you to a share?

Did storms harass or foes perplex,
Did wasps or king-birds bring dismay—
Did wars distress, or labors vex,
Or did you miss your way?
A better seat you could not take
Than on the margin of this lake.

PHILIP FRENEAU

Welcome!—I hail you to my glass:
All welcome here you find;
Here let the cloud of trouble pass,
Here be all care resigned.
This fluid never fails to please,
And drown the griefs of men or bees.

What forced you here we cannot know,
And you will scarcely tell,
But cheery we would have you go
And bid a glad farewell:
On lighter wings we bid you fly—
Your dart will now all foes defy.

Yet take not, oh! too deep a drink,
And in this ocean die;
Here bigger bees than you might sink,
Even bees full six feet high.
Like Pharaoh, then, you would be said
To perish in a sea of red.

Do as you please, your will is mine;
Enjoy it without fear,
And your grave will be this glass of wine,
Your epitaph—a tear;
Go, take your seat in Charon's boat;
We'll tell the hive, you died afloat.

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK

1790—1867

OF this pioneer American poet Edgar Allan Poe testified that "His address has all the captivating *bonhomie* which is the leading feature of his poetry, and, indeed, his whole moral nature." His biographer records that "Halleck never received any compensation for his poems. He seems to have written with the same unselfish indifference to fame; for, up to the year 1839, neither on the titles of his published volumes, nor elsewhere, did his name appear. The poet was born and died at Guilford, Connecticut. From 1832 to 1848 he was employed by the original John Jacob Astor as an accountant. Astor left him an annuity of \$200, stating in his will that it was 'a mark of regard for Mr. Halleck.' Poe esteemed the following elegy as "having that rare merit in composition of this kind—the union of tender sentiment and simplicity. Yet the verses abound in faults. . . . 'Weep thee' and 'deeply' are inaccurate rhymes. Moreover the first quatrain—although beautiful—bears too close a resemblance to the still more beautiful lines of Wordsworth:

'She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love.'

On the Death of Joseph Rodman Drake

GREEN be the turf above thee,
Friend of my better days!
None knew thee but to love thee,
Nor named thee but to praise.

Tears fell when thou wert dying,
From eyes unused to weep,
And long, where thou art lying,
Will tears the cold turf steep.

When hearts, whose truth was proven,
Like thine, are laid in earth,
There should a wreath be woven
To tell the world their worth;

And I, who woke each morrow
To clasp thy hand in mine,
Who shared thy joy and sorrow,
Whose weal and woe were thine,

It should be mine to braid it
Around thy faded brow,
But I've in vain essayed it,
And feel I cannot now.

While memory bids me weep thee,
Nor thoughts nor words are free,
The grief is fixed too deeply
That mourns a man like thee.

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK

Marco Bozzaris

This poem was first published in 1827. Bozzaris was of the martyrs in the Greek war for independence, fell in a night attack upon the Turkish camp, August, near the site of the historical Plataea battlefield.

AT midnight, in his guarded tent,
The Turk was dreaming of the hour
When Greece, her knee in suppliance bent,
Should tremble at his power:
In dreams, through camp and court, he bore
The trophies of a conqueror;
In dreams his song of triumph heard;
Then wore his monarch's signet ring:
Then pressed that monarch's throne—a king;
As wild his thoughts, and gay of wing,
As Eden's garden bird.

At midnight, in the forest shades,
Bozzaris ranged his Suliote band,
True as the steel of their tried blades,
Heroes in heart and hand.
There had the Persian's thousands stood,
There had the glad earth drunk their blood
On old Plataea's day;
And now there breathed that haunted air
The sons of sires who conquered there,
With arm to strike and soul to dare,
As quick, as far as they.

An hour passed on—the Turk awoke;
That bright dream was his last;
He woke—to hear his sentries shriek,
"To arms! they come! the Greek! the Greek!"

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK

He woke—to die midst flame, and smoke,
And shout, and groan, and sabre-stroke,
And death-shots falling thick and fast
As lightnings from the mountain-cloud;
And heard, with voice as trumpet loud,
Bozzaris cheer his band:
“Strike—till the last armed foe expires;
Strike—for your altars and your fires;
Strike—for the green graves of your sires;
God—and your native land!”

They fought—like brave men, long and well;
They piled that ground with Moslem slain,
They conquered—but Bozzaris fell,
Bleeding at every vein.
His few surviving comrades saw
His smile when rang their proud hurrah,
And the red field was won;
Then saw in death his eyelids close
Calmly, as to a night's repose
Like flowers at set of sun. . . .

Bozzaris! with the storied brave
Greece nurtured in her glory's time,
Rest thee—there is no prouder grave,
Even in her own proud clime.
She wore no funeral-weeds for thee,
Nor bade the dark hearse wave its plume
Like torn branch from death's leafless tree
In sorrow's pomp and pageantry,
The heartless luxury of the tomb;
But she remembers thee as one
Long loved and for a season gone;
For thee her poet's lyre is wreathed,
Her marble wrought, her music breathed;

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK

For thee she rings the birthday bells;
Of thee her babe's first lisping tells;
For thine her evening prayer is said
At palace-couch and cottage-bed;
Her soldier, closing with the foe,
Gives for thy sake a deadlier blow;
His plighted maiden, when she fears
For him the joy of her young years,
Thinks of thy fate, and checks her tears;

And she, the mother of thy boys,
Though in her eye and faded cheek
Is read the grief she will not speak,
The memory of her buried joys,
And even she who gave thee birth,
Will, by their pilgrim-circled hearth,
Talk of thy doom without a sigh;
For thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's:
One of the few, the immortal names,
That were not born to die.

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

1795—1820

IT was once an American commonplace to compare Keats with Drake. They both died at twenty-five and they both wrote verse. There the parallel ends. Keats is one of the great poets of the creative imagination, while Drake rises only to the level of pretty fancies. Drake is less remembered by his own poems, such as *The Culprit Fa-* and his spirited lyric on *The American Flag*, than by the touching tribute which Fitz-Greene Halleck paid to his memory:

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

"Green be the turf above thee,
Friend of my better days!
None knew thee but to love thee,
Nor named thee but to praise."

ough the tropes of *The American Flag* are somewhat
ined, and its sensational scheme narrowly escapes
bast, nevertheless it avoids the pathetic and produces
honest and stirring effect.

The Culprit Fay

(THE GATHERING OF THE FAIRIES)

TIS the middle watch of a summer's night—
The earth is dark, but the heavens are bright;
Thought is seen in the vault on high
Out the moon, and the stars, and the cloudless sky,
And the flood which rolls its milky hue,
A river of light, on the welkin blue.
The moon looks downs on old Cro'nest; *
He mellows the shades on his shaggy breast,
And seems his huge gray form to throw,
A silver cone, on the wave below.
His sides are broken by spots of shade,
By the walnut bough and the cedar made,
And through their clustering branches dark
Glimmers and dies the firefly's spark—
Like starry twinkles that momentarily break
Through the rifts of the gathering tempest's rack.
A hill on the Hudson River.

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

The stars are on the moving stream,
And fling, as its ripples gently flow,
A burnished length of wavy beam,
In an eel-like, spiral line below;
The winds are whist, and the owl is still,
The bat in the shelvy rock is hid,
And nought is heard on the lonely hill
But the cricket's chirp, and the answer shrill
Of the gauze-winged katydid,
And the plaint of the wailing whip-poor-will,
Who mourns unseen, and ceaseless sings
Ever a note of wail and woe,
Till morning spreads her rosy wings,
And earth and sky in her glances glow.

'Tis the hour of fairy ban and spell:
The wood-tick has kept the minutes well;
He has counted them all with click and stroke,
Deep in the heart of the mountain oak,
And he has awakened the sentry elfe
Who sleeps with him in the haunted tree,
To bid him ring the hour of twelve,
And call the fays to their revelry;
Twelve small strokes on his tinkling bell—
('Twas made of the white snail's pearly shell,)—
"Midnight comes, and all is well!
Hither, hither, wing your way!
'Tis the dawn of the fairy day."

They come from beds of lichen green,
They creep from the mullein's velvet screen;
Some on the backs of beetles fly
From the silver tops of moon-touched trees,
Where they swung in their cobweb hammocks high,
And rocked about in the evening breeze;

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

Some from the humbird's downy nest—
They had driven him out by elfin power,
And pillowed on plumes of his rainbow breast,
Had slumbered there till the charmed hour;
Some had lain in the scoop of the rock,
With glittering ising-stars * inlaid;
And some had opened the four o'clock,
And stole within its purple shade.
And now they throng the moonlight glade,
Above—below—on every side,
Their little minim forms arrayed
In the tricky pomp of fairy pride.

The American Flag

WHEN Freedom, from her mountain height,
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there!
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldrick of the skies,
And striped its pure, celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then, from his mansion in the sun,
She called her eagle-bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land!

This expression must mean the bits of mica found in the
fissures of rocks.

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

Majestic monarch of the cloud!

Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,
To hear the tempest trumping loud,
And see the lightning lances driven,

When strive the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven,—
Child of the Sun! to thee 'tis given

To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur smoke,
To ward away the battle-stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory!

Flag of the brave! thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high!
When speaks the signal-trumpet tone,
And the long line comes gleaming on,
Ere yet the life-blood, warm and wet,
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier's eye shall brightly turn
To where thy sky-born glories burn,
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance.

And when the cannon-mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle shroud,
And gory sabers rise and fall
Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall,
Then shall thy meteor glances glow,
And cowering foes shall shrink beneath
Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death.

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

Flag of the seas! on ocean wave
Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave;
When death, careering on the gale,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,
And frightened waves rush wildly back
Before the broadside's reeling rack,
Each dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye.

Flag of the free heart's hope and home,
By angel hands to valor given!
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.
Forever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us?

LYDIA H. SIGOURNEY

1791—1865

Indian Names

YE say they all have passed away,
That noble race and brave;
That their light canoes have vanished
From off the crested wave;
That mid the forests where they roamed,
There rings no hunter's shout:
But their name is on your waters—
Ye may not wash it out.

LYDIA H. SIGOURNEY

'Tis where Ontario's billow
Like Ocean's surge is curled;
Where strong Niagara's thunders wake
The echo of the world;
Where red Missouri bringeth
Rich tribute from the west;
And Rappahannock sweetly sleeps
On green Virginia's breast.

Ye say that conelike cabins,
That clustered o'er the vale,
Have disappeared as withered leaves
Before the autumn's gale:
But their memory liveth on your hills,
Their baptism on your shore,
Your everlasting rivers speak
Their dialect of yore.

Old Massachusetts wears it
Within her lordly crown,
And broad Ohio bears it
Amid his young renown;
Connecticut has wreathed it
Where her quiet foliage waves.
And bold Kentucky breathes it hoarse
Through all her ancient caves.

Wachusett hides its lingering voice
Within its rocky heart,
And Alleghany graves its tone
Throughout his lofty chart.
Monadnock, on his forehead hoar,
Doth seal the sacred trust:
Your mountains build their monument,
Though ye destroy their dust.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

1794—1878

BRYANT was honored by Emerson as "a native, sincere, original, patriotic poet." J. G. Holland, alluding to Bryant's successful editorship of the New York *Evening Star* over a period of fifty years, points to the author of *Thanatopsis* as "a poet who could take care of himself and get a living . . . who proved that hysterics are not inspiration, that improvidence is not an unerring sign of genius, and that a man may be a poet and a poet a man." Opinion is divided as to whether *Thanatopsis*, written in his nineteenth year, is his best poem. Many place that distinction upon his lines *To a Waterfowl*. Of Bryant's *Fairest of the Rural Maids*, Poe was a great admirer, calling "its ideal beauty." It belongs to the highest order of poetry. This forest-born maiden is not merely shaped in character by her surroundings; but the circumambient loveliness becomes a part of her own loveliness. Even the light in the trees is identified with the shadows of her hair. Bryant is always direct, simple, intelligible, with no attempt to be decorative and spectacular.

Truth, Crushed to Earth

TRUTH, crushed to earth, shall rise again,—
The eternal years of God are hers;
But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies among his worshippers.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

The Evening Wind

SPIRIT that breathest through my lattice, thou
That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day!
Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow;
Thou hast been out upon the deep at play,
Riding all day the wild blue waves till now,
Roughening their crests, and scattering high their
 spray,
And swelling the white sail. I welcome thee
To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the sea!
Nor I alone,—a thousand bosoms round
 Inhale thee in the fulness of delight;
And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound
 Livelier, at coming of the wind of night;
And languishing to hear thy welcome sound,
 Lies the vast inland, stretched beyond the sight.
Go forth into the gathering shade; go forth,—
God's blessing breathed upon the fainting earth!
Go, rock the little wood-bird in his nest;
 Curl the still waters, bright with stars; and rouse
The wide old wood from his majestic rest,
 Summoning, from the innumerable boughs,
The strange, deep harmonies that haunt his breast.
Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly bows
The shutting flower, and darkling waters pass,
And where the o'ershadowing branches sweep the grass.
Stoop o'er the place of graves, and softly sway
 The sighing herbage by the gleaming stone,
That they who near the churchyard willows stray,
 And listen in the deepening gloom, alone,
May think of gentle souls who passed away,
 Like thy pure breath, into the vast unknown;

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

at forth from heaven among the sons of men,
and gone into the boundless heaven again.

the faint old man shall lean his silver head
To feel thee; thou shalt kiss the child asleep,
and dry the moistened curls that overspread
His temples, while his breathing grows more deep;
and they who stand about the sick man's bed,
Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep,
and softly part his curtains to allow
thy visit, grateful to his burning brow.

—but the circle of eternal change,
Which is the life of nature, shall restore,
with sounds and sense from all thy mighty range,
Thee to thy birthplace of the deep once more;
sweet odors in the sea-air, sweet and strange,
Shall tell the homesick mariner of the shore;
and, listening to the murmur, he shall deem
he hears the rustling leaf and running stream.

O, Fairest of the Rural Maids

O, FAIREST of the rural maids!
Thy birth was in the fairest shades;
Green boughs and glimpses of the sky
Were all that met thine infant eye.

Thy sports, thy wanderings when a child,
Were ever in the sylvan wild;
And all the beauty of the place
Is in thy heart and on thy face.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

The twilight of the trees and rocks
Is in the light shade of thy locks;
Thy step is as the wind that weaves
Its playful way among the leaves.

Thine eyes are springs, in whose serene
And silent waters Heaven is seen;
Their lashes are the herbs that look
On their young figures in the brook.

The forest depths by foot impressed
Are not more sinless than thy breast;
The holy peace that fills the air
Of those calm solitudes, is there.

From "A Forest Hymn"

THE groves were God's first temples. Ere man
learned
To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,
And spread the roof above them—ere he framed
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
The sound of anthems; in the darkling wood,
Amidst the cool and silence, he knelt down,
And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks
And supplication. For his simple heart
Might not resist the sacred influences
Which, from the stilly twilight of the place,
And from the gray old trunks that high in heaven
Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound
Of the invisible breath that swayed at once
All their green tops, stole over him, and bowed
His spirit with the thought of boundless power

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

inaccessible majesty. Ah, why
ould we, in the world's riper years, neglect
d's ancient sanctuaries, and adore
ly among the crowd, and under roofs
at our frail hands have raised? Let me, at least,
re, in the shadow of this aged wood,
er one hymn—thrice happy if it find
ceptance in His ear.

Father, thy hand
th reared these venerable columns, thou
dst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst look down
on the naked earth, and forthwith rose
these fair ranks of trees. They in thy sun
dded, and shook their green leaves in thy breeze,
d shot towards heaven. The century-living crow,
nose birth was in their tops, grew old and died
ong their branches, till at last they stood,
now they stand, massy and tall and dark.

To a Waterfowl

*is a great favorite. The true poet speaks in such
s as*

*Thou'rt gone: the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form.*

o in

*The desert and illimitable air—
Lone wandering, but not lost.*

*is a rounded poem, one that leaves upon us a sense of
pleteness. The didactic conclusion of it is excusable,
ing to the elevation of the moral.*

WHITHER, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps
of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—
The desert and illimitable air,—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart:

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Thanatopsis

TO him who in the love of nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
In various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty; and she glides
Into his darker musings with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
O'er thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
Comes a still voice: Yet a few days, and thee
No more the all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth to be resolved to earth again;
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix for ever with the elements—
To be a brother to the insensible rock,
And to the sluggish clod which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good—
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between—
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning; traverse Barca's desert sands,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound
Save his own dashings—yet—the dead are there;
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest; and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years—matron, and maid,
And the sweet babe, and the gray-headed man,—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan which moves
To that mysterious realm where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon; but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

From "The Past"

THOU unrelenting Past!
Strong are the barriers round thy dark domain,
And fetters, sure and fast,
Hold all that enter thy unbreathing reign.

Far in thy realm withdrawn,
Old empires sit in sullenness and gloom,
And glorious ages gone
Lie deep within the shadow of thy womb.

Childhood, with all its mirth,
Youth, Manhood, Age that draws us to the ground,
And last, Man's Life on earth,
Glide to thy dim dominions, and are bound.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Full many a mighty name
Lurks in thy depths, unuttered, unrevered;
With thee are silent fame,
Forgotten arts, and wisdom disappeared.

Thine for a space are they,—
Yet shalt thou yield thy treasures up at last!
Thy gates shall yet give way,
Thy bolts shall fall, inexorable Past!

All shall come back, each tie
Of pure affection shall be knit again;
Alone shall Evil die,
And Sorrow dwell a prisoner in thy reign.

MARIA BROOKS

1795—1845

MARIA BROOKS (Maria del Occidente) one of the earlier women poets of America, author of the epic poem *Zophiel*, was designated by Southey as, "the most impassioned and imaginative of all poetesses." Careful critics can not sustain this florid verdict. We must still reckon with Sappho and Mrs. Browning. It is possible to allow Maria a place only on the foothills of fancy. I quote from *Zophiel* which celebrates an angel that fell with Lucifer. Here Zophiel goes to visit Tahathyam, the son of another fallen angel, now living in the depths of the earth, guarding a vase filled with the elixir of life. Tahathyam advances to conduct Zophiel to the subterranean palace.

From "Zophiel"

HE sat upon a car (and the large pearl,
Once cradled in it, glimmered now without.)
Bound midway on two serpents' backs, that curl
In silent swiftmess as he glides about.

MARIA BROOKS

ell, 'twas first in liquid amber wet,
nen, ere the fragrant cement hardened round,
o'er with large and precious stones 'twas set
y skilful Tsavaven, or made or found.
reins seemed pliant crystal, (but their strength
ad matched his earthly mother's silken band)
flecked with rubies, flowed in ample length,
ke sparkles o'er Tahathyam's beauteous hand.
reptiles, in their fearful beauty, drew,
s if from love, like steeds of Araby;
blood of lady's lip their scarlet hue;
their scales so bright and sleek, 'twas pleasure but to
see.

h open mouths as proud to show the bit,
hey raise their heads and arch their necks (with eye
bright as if with meteor fire were lit)
nd dart their barbed tongues 'twixt fangs of ivory.
se, when the quick advancing sprites they saw
rl their swift wings, and tread with angel grace
smooth, fair pavement, checked their speed in awe.
nd glided aside as if to give them space.

* * * * *

rocky roof was seen; a tender blue
ppeared, as of the sky, and clouds about it play:
in the midst, an orb looked as 'twere meant
o shame the sun, it mimicked him so well.
ah! no quickening, grateful warmth it sent;
old as the rock beneath, the paly radiance fell.
hin, from thousand lamps, the lustre strays,
elected back from gems about the wall;
from twelve dolphin shapes a fountain plays,
ust in the center of a spacious hall;
whether in the sunbeam formed to sport,
hese shapes once lived in suppleness and pride,

MARIA BROOKS

And then, to decorate this wondrous court,
Were stolen from the waves and petrified;
Or, molded by some imitative gnome,
And scaled all o'er with gems, they were but stor
Casting their showers and rainbows neath the don
To man, or angel's eye might not be known.
No snowy fleece in these sad realms was found,
Nor silken ball by maidens loved so well;
But ranged in lightest garniture around,
In seemly folds, a shining tapestry fell.
And fibres of asbestos, bleached in fire,
And all with pearls and sparkling gems o'erflecked,
Of that strange court composed the rich attire,
And such the cold, fair form of sad Tahathya
decked.

GEORGE WASHINGTON DOANE

1799—1859

HE was consecrated bishop of New Jersey in 1832, and subsequently organized Burlington College. In many ways Bishop Doane was far in advance of his time, advocating daily services and the free church system when these were practically unknown in America. Besides the following, his best-known poems are *What is That, Mother?* and the hymn, *Softly Now the Light of Day*.

Life Sculpture

CHISEL in hand stood a sculptor boy
With his marble block before him,
And his eyes lit up with a smile of joy,
As an angel-dream passed o'er him.

GEORGE WASHINGTON DOANE

He carved the dream on that shapeless stone,
With many a sharp incision;
With heaven's own light the sculpture shone,—
He'd caught that angel-vision.

Children of life are we, as we stand
With our lives uncarved before us,
Waiting the hour when, at God's command,
Our life-dream shall pass o'er us.

If we carve it then on the yielding stone,
With many a sharp incision,
Its heavenly beauty shall be our own,—
Our lives, that angel-vision.

GRENVILLE MELLEN

1799—1841

*an "Ode on the Celebration of the Battle of Bunker
Hill, June 17, 1825"*

The Lonely Bugle Grieves

THE trump hath blown,
And now upon that reeking hill
Laughter rides screaming on the vengeful ball;
While with terrific signal shrill,
The vultures, from their bloody eyries flown,
Hang o'er them like a pall.
Now deeper roll the maddening drums,
And the mingling host like ocean heaves:
While from the midst a horrid wailing comes,
And high above the fight the lonely bugle grieves!

EDWARD COATE PINKNEY

1802—1828

The Serenade

LOOK out upon the stars, my love,
And shame them with thine eyes,
On which, than on the lights above,

There hang more destinies.

Night's beauty is the harmony

Of blending shades and light:

Then, Lady, up—look out, and be

A sister to the Night!

Sleep not! Thine image wakes for aye

Within my watching breast:

Sleep not! from her soft sleep should fly,

Who robs all hearts of rest.

Nay, Lady, from thy slumbers break,

And make the darkness gay,

With looks, whose brightness well might make

Of darker night a day.

A Health

Poe says: "This poem is especially beautiful. The poet's elevation which it induces we must refer chiefly to our sympathy in the poet's enthusiasm. We pardon his hyperboles for the evident earnestness with which they are uttered."

FILL this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone—

A woman, of her gentle sex

The seeming paragon;

To whom the better elements

And kindly stars have given

A form so fair, that, like the air,

'Tis less of earth than heaven.

EDWARD COATE PINKNEY

Her every tone is music's own,
Like those of morning birds;
And something more than melody
Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
And from her lips each flows
As one may see the burden'd bee
Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,
The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancy,
The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns—
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace
A picture on the brain;
And of her voice in echoing hearts
A sound must long remain;
But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh, my latest sigh
Will not be life's but hers.

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone—
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon.
Her health! and would on earth there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

1803—1882

IF Emerson, says Edmund Gosse, could have risen frequently to his highest, "he would unquestionably have been one of the sovereign poets of the world. Perhaps we ought to consider him as an asteroid among the planets. Stedman says that Emerson is eminent for "sudden meteor of thought." We are also told that "in his gift for saying things, Emerson is the chief of American poets." Matthew Arnold says that "Emerson's poetry is interesting; it makes one think. But it is not the poetry of one of the best poets." Arnold thinks that "the noble lines graven on the Concord Monument is the exception with him." Yet we must all admit that there are moments when his lines flash upon our darkness a sudden light from the Infinite.

Glance at all of his work: his poetry is only philosophy in verse, while his essays are only poetry in prose. A Victor Hugo is the greatest soul of France and as John Ruskin and Thomas Carlyle are the greatest souls of modern England, so Emerson is the greatest thinker of America. When I say this, I remember our Professor William James who, in his sane and workable philosophy is coming more and more to contest the supremacy of Emerson.

Heroism

SO nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must,*
The youth replies, *I can.*

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Hymn

AT THE COMPLETION OF THE CONCORD MONUMENT,
APRIL 19, 1836

Y the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
ere once the embattled farmers stood,
and fired the shot heard round the world.

e foe long since in silence slept;
like the conqueror silent sleeps;
l Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

this green bank, by this soft stream,
Ve set to-day a votive stone;
at memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

it, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

Forbearance

AST thou named all the birds without a gun?
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?
ch men's tables eaten bread and pulse?
med, faced danger with a heart of trust?
loved so well a high behavior,
n or maid, that thou from speech refrained,
ity more nobly to repay?
my friend, and teach me to be thine!

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Days

DAUGHTERS of Time, the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them
I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

The Test

I HUNG my verses in the wind,
Time and tide their faults may find.
All were winnowed through and through,
Five lines lasted sound and true;
Five were smelted in a pot
Than the South more fierce and hot;
These the siroc could not melt,
Fire their fiercer flaming felt,
And the meaning was more white
Than July's meridian light.
Sunshine cannot bleach the snow,
Nor time unmake what poets know.
Have you eyes to find the five
Which five hundred did survive?

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

The Problem

LIKE a church; I like a cowl;
I love a prophet of the soul;
On my heart monastic aisles
Like sweet strains, or pensive smiles:
Not for all his faith can see
And I that cowlèd churchman be.
Should the vest on him allure,
Whom I could not me endure?

From a vain or shallow thought
Lawful Jove young Phidias brought;
Or from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
From the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
Orations of nations came,
From the volcano's tongue of flame,
From the burning core below,—
The canticles of love and woe:
The hand that rounded Peter's dome
Groined the aisles of Christian Rome
Fought in a sad sincerity;
From God he could not free;
GuilDED better than he knew;
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

First thou what wove yon woodbird's nest
Plucks leaves and feathers from her breast?
How the fish outbuilt her shell,
Living with morn each annual cell?
How the sacred pine-tree adds
Her old leaves new myriads?

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Such and so grew these holy piles,
While love and terror laid the tiles.
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,
As the best gem upon her zone,
And Morning opes with haste her lids
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For out of Thought's interior sphere
These wonders rose to upper air;
And Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.

These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass.
The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.
Ever the fiery Pentecost
Girds with one flame the countless host,
Trances the heart through chanting choirs
And through the priest the mind inspires.
The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by seers or sibyls told,
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind.
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.
I know what say the fathers wise—
The Book itself before me lies,

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Old Chrysostom, best Augustine,
And he who blent both in his line,
The younger Golden Lips or mines,
Taylor, the Shakespeare of divines.
His words are music in my ear,
I see his cowlèd portrait dear;
And yet, for all his faith could see,
I would not the good bishop be.

Brahma

IF the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

*Ode: Sung in the Town Hall, Concord,
July 4th, 1857*

O TENDERLY the haughty day
Fills his blue urn with fire;
One morn is in the mighty heaven,
And one in our desire.

The cannon booms from town to town,
Our pulses beat not less,
The joy-bells chime their tidings down,
Which children's voices bless.

For He that flung the broad blue fold
O'er-mantling land and sea,
One third part of the sky unrolled
For the banner of the free.

The men are ripe of Saxon kind
To build an equal state—
To take the statute from the mind
And make of duty fate.

United States! the ages plead—
Present and Past in under-song—
Go put your creed into your deed,
Nor speak with double tongue.

For sea and land don't understand,
Nor skies without a frown
See rights for which the one hand fights
By the other cloven down.

Be just at home; then write your scroll
Of honor o'er the sea,
And bid the broad Atlantic roll,
A ferry of the free.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

And henceforth there shall be no chain,
Save underneath the sea
The wires shall murmur through the main
Sweet songs of liberty.

The conscious stars accord above,
The waters wild below,
And under, through the cable wove,
Her fiery errands go.

For He that worketh high and wise,
Nor pauses in his plan,
Will take the sun out of the skies
Ere freedom out of man.

The Rhodora

INES ON BEING ASKED, WHENCE IS THE FLOWER

May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh rhodora in the woods,
Lading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook:
Purple petals fallen in the pool
Made the black waters with their beauty gay,—
Who might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
Thy charm is wasted on the marsh and sky,
Tell them, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Beauty is its own excuse for being.
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask; I never knew,
But in my simple ignorance suppose
Thy selfsame Power that brought me there brought you.

The Humble-Bee

BURLY, dozing humble-bee,
 Where thou art is clime for me.
 Let them sail for Porto Rique,
 Far-off heats through seas to seek;
 I will follow thee alone,
 Thou animated torrid-zone!
 Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
 Let me chase thy waving lines;
 Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
 Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
 Joy of thy dominion!
 Sailor of the atmosphere;
 Swimmer through the waves of air;
 Voyager of light and noon;
 Epicurean of June;
 Wait, I prithee, till I come
 Within earshot of thy hum,—
 All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,
 With a net of shining haze
 Silvers the horizon wall,
 And with softness touching all,
 Tints the human countenance
 With a color of romance,
 And infusing subtle heats,
 Turns the sod to violets,
 Thou, in sunny solitudes,
 Rover of the underwoods,
 The green silence dost displace
 With thy mellow, breezy bass.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap and daffodels,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,
Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue,
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste,
All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher!
Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.
When the fierce northwestern blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

The Snow-storm

A NNOUNCED by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow; and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight; the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveler stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north-wind's masonry!
Out of an unseen quarry, evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake or tree or door
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage; naught cares he
For number or proportion. Mockingly,
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Mauger the farmer's sighs; and at the gate
A tapering turret overtops the work.
And when his hours are numbered, and the world
Is all his own, retiring as he were not,
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's night-work,
The frolic architecture of the snow.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

From "Boston Hymn"

READ IN MUSIC HALL, JANUARY 1, 1863

THE word of the Lord by night
To the watching Pilgrims came,
As they sat by the seaside,
And filled their hearts with flame.

God said, "I am tired of kings,
I suffer them no more;
Up to my ear the morning brings
The outrage of the poor.

* * * * *

"My angel—his name is Freedom—
Choose *him* to be your king;
He shall cut pathways east and west,
And fend you with his wing.

"Lo! I uncover the land
Which I hid of old time in the West,
As the sculptor uncovers the statue
When he has wrought his best;

"I show Columbia, of the rocks
Which dip their foot in the seas,
And soar to the air-borne flocks
Of clouds, and the boreal fleece.

"I will divide my goods;
Call in the wretch and slave:
None shall rule but the humble,
And none but Toil shall have.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

"I will have never a noble,
No lineage counted great;
Fishers and choppers and plowmen
Shall constitute a State.

* * * * *

"I cause from every creature
His proper good to flow;
As much as he is and doeth,
So much he shall bestow.

"But, laying hands on another
To coin his labor and sweat,
He goes in pawn to his victim
For eternal years in debt.

"To-day unbind the captive:
So only are ye unbound.
Lift up a people from the dust;
Trump of their rescue, sound!

"Pay ransom to the owner,
And fill the bag to the brim.
Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
And ever was. Pay him!

* * * * *

"My will fulfilled shall be,
For, in daylight or in dark,
My thunderbolt has eyes to see
His way home to the mark."

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Give All to Love

GIVE all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good fame,
Plans, credit, and the Muse—
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,
Untold intent;
But it is a god,
Knows its own path,
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout,
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending:
Such 'twill reward;—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor—

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Keep thee today,
To-morrow, for ever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise,
Flits across her bosom young,
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay;
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go
The gods arrive.

Good-bye

GOOD-BYE, proud world! I'm going home;
Thou art not my friend, and I'm not thine.
Long through thy weary crowds I roam;
A river-ark on the ocean brine,
Long I've been toss'd like the driven foam,
But now, proud world, I'm going home.

Good-bye to flattery's fawning face,
To grandeur, with his wise grimace,

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

upstart wealth's averted eye,
supple office, low and high,
crowded halls, to court and street,
frozen hearts and hasting feet,
those who go and those who come—
ad-bye, proud world! I'm going home.
I'm going to my own hearthstone,
I'm in yon green hills alone—
secret nook in a pleasant land,
where groves the frolic fairies plann'd,
where arches green, the livelong day,
to the blackbird's roundelay,
where vulgar feet have never trod—
a spot that is sacred to thought and God.

when I am safe in my sylvan home,
head on the pride of Greece and Rome,
when I am stretch'd beneath the pines,
where the evening star so holy shines,
though at the lore and pride of man
the sophist schools, and the learned clan;
what are they all, in their high conceit,
when man in the bush with God may meet?

SARAH HELEN WHITMAN

1803—1878

IT was to this admirable woman, at one time his fiancée, that Edgar Allan Poe wrote his famous lines *To Helen*. She, in turn, addressed her noted sonnet sequence to Poe.

Sonnets

ON our lone pathway bloomed no earthly hopes:
Sorrow and death were near us, as we stood
Where the dim forest, from the upland slopes,
Swept darkly to the sea. The enchanted wood
Thrilled as by some foreboding terror stirred;
And as the waves broke on the lonely shore,
In their low monotone, methought I heard
A solemn voice that sighed, "Ye meet no more."
There, while the level sunbeams seemed to burn
Through the long aisles of red, autumnal gloom—
Where stately, storied cenotaphs inurn
Sweet human hopes, too fair on Earth to bloom—
Was the bud reaped, whose petals pure and cold
Sleep on my heart till Heaven the flower unfold.

If thy sad heart, pining for human love,
In its earth solitude grew dark with fear,
Lest the high Sun of Heaven itself should prove
Powerless to save from that phantasmal sphere
Wherein thy spirit wandered,—if the flowers
That pressed around thy feet, seemed but to bloom
In lone Gethsemanes, through starless hours,
When all who loved had left thee to thy doom,—
Oh, yet believe that, in that hollow vale
Where thy soul lingers, waiting to attain
So much of Heaven's sweet grace as shall avail
To lift its burden of remorseful pain,
My soul shall meet thee, and its Heaven forego
Till God's great love, on both, one hope, one Heaven
bestow.

ISAAC McCLELLAN

1806—1899

HERE is a poem that I loved in boyhood and committed to memory. In that long ago I was thrilled by its poetic energy. It thrills me still; although I now see Napoleon—driven on by selfish ambition—never rose to a true glory.

The Death of Napoleon

WILD was the night, yet a wilder night
Hung round the soldier's pillow:
In his bosom there waged a fiercer fight
Than the fight on the wrathful billow.

Few fond mourners were kneeling by,
The few that his stern heart cherished;
They knew, by his glazed and unearthly eye,
That life had nearly perished.

They knew by his awful and kingly look,
By the order hastily spoken,
That he dreamed of days when the nations shook,
And the nations' hosts were broken.

He dreamed that the Frenchman's sword still slew,
And triumphed the Frenchman's eagle;
And the struggling Austrian fled anew,
Like the hare before the beagle.

He bearded Russian he scourged again,
The Prussian's camp was routed;

ISAAC McCLELLAN

And again on the hills of haughty Spain
His mighty armies shouted.

Over Egypt's sands, over Alpine snows,
At the pyramids, at the mountain,
Where the wave of the lordly Danube flows,
And by the Italian fountain,

On the snowy cliffs where mountain streams
Dash by the Switzer's dwelling,
He led again, in his dying dreams,
His hosts, the proud earth quelling.

Again Marengo's field was won,
And Jena's bloody battle:
Again the world was overrun,
Made pale at his cannon's rattle.

He died at the close of that darksome day,
A day that shall live in story:
In the rocky land they placed his clay,
"And left him alone with his glory."

NATHANIEL P. WILLIS

1806—1867

WILLIS was a great figure in the time of Poe, but he has now almost faded from memory. His scriptural poems had great interest for his generation; but they do not seem to have the breath of enduring life. He was not the best perhaps as a prose writer, because he seldom came out of the zone of mere fancy. But we feel the quick touch of imagination in the poem I am quoting. "There is about this little poem," says Poe, "a true imagination. Its grace, dignity and pathos are impressive; and there is more in it of earnestness, of soul, than anything [else] I have seen from the pen of this author."

Two Women

THE shadows lay along Broadway,
'Twas near the twilight tide,
And slowly there a lady fair
Was walking in her pride—
Alone walked she, yet viewlessly
Walked spirits at her side.

Peace charmed the street beneath her feet,
And Honor charmed the air;
And all astir looked kind on her,
And called her good as fair;—
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true;

NATHANIEL P. WILLIS

For her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo:—
Ah, honored well are charms to sell,
If priests the selling do.

Now, walking there was one more fair—
A slight girl, lily-pale;
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail:
'Twixt want and scorn she walked forlorn,
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
For this world's peace to pray;
For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman's heart gave way!—
And the sin forgiven by Christ in heaven
By man is cursed alway!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

1807—1892

appraising Whittier I echo Harriet Beecher Stowe, who, on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, said: "It has been Whittier's chief glory, not that he could speak fire-branded words, but that he spoke them for the despised, the helpless and the dumb—for those too ignorant to reward him, too poor to reward him." The stormy qualities of his mind, motivated by his conscience, produce a kind of military morality which uses all the deadly arms of actual warfare. He aims to give his song "a rude martial blow—a blow in every thought." His invective is merciless and he rises into a white-heat of rage against social wrongs. Yet he voices also the simpler, happier, human life—the primitive life of the Indian and the Settler, the life of the household and the farm. But it is in his protest against the oppression and plunder of the people that he rises into his true greatness. Edmund Clarence Mearns says: "Whittier is the incarnation of Biblical prophecy, of the moral energy that breathed alike through the cycle of changes from dogma to reason, in Hooker, Edwards, Parker, Garrison and Emerson." His lines, chanting of Ezekiel, could easily be applied to himself:

"The burden of a prophet's power
Fell on me in that fearful hour:
From off unutterable woes
The curtain of the future rose:
I saw far down the coming time
The fiery chastisement of crime.
With noise of mingling hosts and jar
Of falling towers and shouts of war,
I saw the nations rise and fall
Like fire-gleams on my tent's white wall."

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Ichabod

*An indictment of Daniel Webster when he failed to support
the Emancipation Cause*

SO fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore!

Revile him not,—the Tempter hath
A snare for all;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage,
When he who might
Have lighted up and led his age,
Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,
In sadness make.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Of all we loved and honored, naught
Save power remains—
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.

All else is gone; from those great eyes
The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead!

Then, pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame:
Walk backward, with averted gaze,
And hide the shame!

From "The Eternal Goodness"

I WALK with bare, hushed feet the ground
Ye tread with boldness shod:
I dare not fix with mete and bound
The love and power of God.

I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak
To bear an untried pain,
The bruised reed He will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

And so beside the silent sea
I wait the muffled oar:
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air:
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

Maud Muller

MAUD MULLER, on a summer's day,
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But, when she glanced to the far-off town,
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest
And a nameless longing filled her breast—

A wish, that she hardly dared to own,
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

drew his bridle in the shade
the apple trees, to greet the maid,

ask a draught from the spring that flowed
rough the meadow, across the road.

stooped where the cool spring bubbled up.
filled for him her small tin cup,

blushed as she gave it, looking down
her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

hanks!" said the Judge, "a sweeter draught
om a fairer hand was never quaffed."

spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,
the singing birds and the humming bees;

en talked of the haying, and wondered whether
e cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

d Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,
d her graceful ankles, bare and brown,

d listened, while a pleased surprise
oked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

last, like one who for delay
ks a vain excuse, he rode away.

aud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me!
at I the Judge's bride might be!

e would dress me up in silks so fine,
d praise and toast me at his wine.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat,
My brother should sail a painted boat.

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,
And the baby should have a new toy each day.

"And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,
And all should bless me who left our door."

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,
And saw Maud Muller standing still:

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air
Show her wise and good as she is fair.

"Would she were mine, and I to-day,
Like her, a harvester of hay.

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle, and song of birds,
And health, and quiet, and loving words."

But he thought of his sister proud and cold,
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,
When he hummed in court an old love tune;

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

And the young girl mused beside the well,
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead,

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms,
To dream of meadows and clover blooms;

And the proud man sighed with a secret pain,
"Ah, that I were free again!

"Free as when I rode that day
Where the barefoot maiden raked the hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,
And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and child-birth pain,
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring brook fall
Over the roadside, through the wall,

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

In the shade of the apple-tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein,

And, gazing down with a timid grace,
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls
Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinnet turned,
The tallow candle an astral burned;

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, "It might have been."

The Barefoot Boy

BLESSINGS on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;
From my heart I give thee joy—
I was once a barefoot boy!
Prince thou art—the grown-up man
Only is republican.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye—
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wild flower's time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;
Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the ground-nut trails its vine,
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of gray hornet artisans!
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy—
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Oh for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night—
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine, on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches too;
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

Oh for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread;
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
On the door-stone, gray and rude!
O'er me, like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
Looped in many a wind-swung fold;
While for music came the play
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

And, to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch: pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptism of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil:
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

1808—1882

IT is to Longfellow, in his *Ladder of Saint Augustine* that Tennyson refers in the opening lines of *In Memoriam*:

"I hold it true with him who sings
To one clear harp in diverse tones,
That men may rise on stepping stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."

Longfellow's poetry suffers from the fact that, excepting two great domestic bereavements, his life was one of unbroken sunshine. In his whole career he never encountered any serious rebuff, and was so kindly and moderate as to provoke little envy or antagonism. As Thomas Wentworth Higginson records, "Among all the sons of song there has rarely been such an instance of unbroken and unstained success." Perhaps as a consequence of this Longfellow has no profound philosophy of life. He skims over the surface of things—never sees into the tragic deeps, where we see the footprints of Dante and Browning. Therefore he does not belong to the first order of poets.

Poe, in admitting Longfellow to the "first place among the poets of America" in his era, goes on to deplore Longfellow's "affectation and imitation." And here is Whitman's rather highly colored estimate: "Longfellow is the kind of bard and counteractant most needed for our materialistic, self-assertive, money-worshipping Anglo-Saxon races, and especially for the present age in America. . . . He does not urge or lash. He strikes a splendid average and does not sing exceptional passions, nor humanity's jagged escapades." The present-day poetry radical critic of Longfellow may well give ear to this quoted statement coming as it does from Whitman, the pioneer radical of them all.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

The Arrow and the Song

I SHOT an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

From "My Lost Youth"

*"The sweetness and truth of this poem," says Alfred
Noyes, "can hardly be praised too highly. Nothing is here
exaggerated, wrenched, or over-stated. There is no false
idealism, dwelling on the insignificant or ugly for the mere
sensatation of it. . . Poetry of this kind does not die."*

OFTEN I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will.
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts." . .

I remember the sea-fight far away,
How it thunder'd o'er the tide!
And the dead captains, as they lay
In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil bay
Where they in battle died.
And the sound of that mournful song
Goes through me with a thrill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts." . .

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the school-boy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die;
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.

And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Hymn to the Night

I HEARD the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

The fountain of perpetual peace flows there—
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
The best-belovèd Night!

The Day Is Done

Poe says: "With no great range of imagination, these lines have been justly admired for their delicacy of expression. Some of the images are very effective. Nothing can be better than—

‘The bards sublime
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.’

The idea of the last quatrain is also very effective. The poem on the whole, however, is chiefly to be admired for the graceful insouciance of its meter, so well in accordance with the character of the sentiments."

THE day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me
That my soul cannot resist:

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor;
And tonight I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who, through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

The Psalm of Life

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!—
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returneth,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each tomorrow
Find us farther than today.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor, and to wait.

Paul Revere's Ride

I.

LISTEN, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April in Seventy-five:
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

II.

He said to his friend—"If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower, as a signal light—
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country-folk to be up and to arm."

III.

Then he said "Good night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where, swinging wide at her moorings, lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war:
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon, like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

IV.

Meanwhile his friend, through alley and street
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till, in the silence around him, he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

V.

When he climbed to the tower of the church,
Up the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
In the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade—
Up the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen, and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

VI.

Beneath, in the church-yard, lay the dead
Their night encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"

VII.

A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
Nor suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

VIII.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.

IX.

And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

X.

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the
light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

XV.

Through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm—
A cry of defiance and not of fear—
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

1809—1894

DR. HOLMES is an essayist first and a poet afterwards and this because he is seldom or never possessed of "that fine frenzy" which distinguishes the poet born. *THE Chambered Nautilus*, a perfect poem of its kind, is his best performance in verse. The first book to have his name on the title-page was the *Poems* of 1836, issued while he was trying to build up a medical practice in Boston. In this volume was his stirring lyric, *Old Ironsides*, which struck a popular chord and was the means of preventing the demolition of the U. S. frigate *Constitution*.

Holmes was a facile versifier, and his ease and wit and good fellowship made him an admirable "occasional" poet; the graceful laureate of Boston celebrations.

The Voiceless

WE count the broken lyres that rest
Where the sweet wailing singers slumber,
But o'er their silent sister's breast
The wild-flowers who will stoop to number?
A few can touch the magic string,
And noisy Fame is proud to win them;
Alas for those who never sing,
But die with all their music in them!

Nay, grieve not for the dead alone
Whose song has told their hearts' sad story;
Weep for the voiceless, who have known
The cross without the crown of glory!

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Not where Leucadian breezes sweep
O'er Sappho's memory-haunted billow;
But where the glistening night-dews weep
On nameless sorrow's churchyard pillow.

O hearts that break and give no sign
Save whitening lip and fading tresses,
Till Death pours out his cordial wine,
Slow-dropped from Misery's crushing presses!
If singing breath or echoing cord
To every hidden pang were given,
What endless melodies were poured,
As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!

The Chambered Nautilus

THIS is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
In the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming
hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no
more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that
sings:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting
sea!

The Boys

HAS there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
If there has, take him out, without making a
noise.

Hang the Almanac's cheat and the Catalogue's spite!
Old Time is a liar! We're twenty to-night!

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

re twenty! We're twenty! Who says we are
more?

s tipsy—young jackanapes!—show him the door!
ay temples at twenty?"—Yes! *white* if we please;
ere the snowflakes fall thickest theres nothing can
freeze!

s it snowing I spoke of? Excuse the mistake!
k close—you will see not a sign of a flake!
want some new garlands for those we have shed,
d these are white roses in place of the red.

've a trick, we young fellows, you may have been
told,
talking (in public) as if we were old;
at boy we call "Doctor," and this we call "Judge";
a neat little fiction—of course it's all fudge.

at fellow's the "Speaker"—the one on the right;
r. Mayor," my young one, how are you to-night?
at's our "Member of Congress," we say when we
chaff;
ere's the "Reverend" What's-his-name?—don't make
me laugh.

at boy with the grave mathematical look
ade believe he had written a wonderful book,
d the ROYAL SOCIETY thought it was *true*!
they chose him right in; a good joke it was, too!

ere's a boy, we pretend, with a three-decker brain,
at could harness a team with a logical chain;
hen he spoke for our manhood in syllabled fire,
e called him "The Justice," but now he's "The
Squire."

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith:
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free—
Just read on his medal, "My country," "of thee!"

You hear that boy laughing? You think he's all fun
But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has done.
The children laugh loud as they troop to his call,
And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of

Yes, we're boys—always playing with tongue or v
pen;

And I sometimes have asked, Shall we ever be men?
Shall we always be youthful and laughing and gay,
Till the last dear companion drops smiling away?

Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its gray!
The stars of its winter, the dews of its May!
And when we have done with our life-tasting toys,
Dear Father, take care of thy children, THE BOY

The Height of the Ridiculous

I WROTE some lines once on a time
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

I called my servant, and he came;
How kind it was of him
To mind a slender man like me,
He of the mighty limb.

"These to the printer," I exclaimed,
And, in my humorous way,
I added (as a trifling jest,)
"There'll be the devil to pay."

He took the paper, and I watched,
And saw him peep within;
At the first line he read, his face
Was all upon the grin.

He read the next; the grin grew broad,
And shot from ear to ear;
He read the third; a chuckling noise
I now began to hear.

The fourth; he broke into a roar;
The fifth; his waistband split;
The sixth; he burst five buttons off,
And tumbled in a fit.

Ten days and nights, with sleepless eye,
I watched that wretched man,
And since, I never dare to write
As funny as I can.

A Logical Story—The Deacon's Master-piece, or the Wonderful "One-Hoss Shay"

HAVE you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay,
That was built in such logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
That a chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out*.

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell yeou,")

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

He would build one shay to beat the taown
'N' the keounty 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it *couldn'* break daown:
"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
 is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees,
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—

Last of its timber,—they couldn't sell 'em,
Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED;—it came and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten;
"Hahnsum kerridge," they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;—
Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and Forty at last arrive,
And then come Fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—the Earthquake-day,—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay.
A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say.
There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
And the back-crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle, and hub *encore*.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt
In another hour it will be *worn out*!

First of November, Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
"Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went they.

The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,—
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half past nine by the meet'n'-house clock,—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,—
All at once, and nothing first,—
Just as bubbles do when thy burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
Logic is logic. That's all I say.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

1809—1849

VARIOUSLY acclaimed and decried by his contemporaries, Poe has been truly hailed by Swinburne as having voiced the "one pure American note of original song worth singing—a note echoed from the singing of no other man—a note of song neither wide nor deep, but utterly true, rich, clear and native to the singer." Tennyson—thinking of both the prose and verse of Poe—calls him "the most original American genius." Edmund Gosse declares that "From Tennyson to Austin Dobson [in England] there is hardly a poet whose verse-music does not show traces of Poe's influence." On the other hand, John Burroughs finds Poe "a verbal poet merely, empty of thought, empty of love for any real thing—a graceful and nimble skater over the deeps and shallows of life. He was a unique genius . . . but not broadly related to his fellows, as were Longfellow and Whittier and Whitman." And Brander Matthews says, with a true discernment: "Poe's verses throb with an inexpressible magic and glow with intangible fantasy. His poems have no other purpose; they convey no moral; they echo no call to duty; they celebrate beauty only—beauty immaterial and evanescent: they are their own excuse for being."

Poe's tragic life-story is familiar to all. In 1845, *The Raven and Other Poems* appeared. *The Raven* was widely copied, and Poe suddenly found himself the most talked-of writer of the time. The poem has a lofty place in the literature of the supernatural and the weird. Who is not thrilled by its crescendo movement to the tragic climax?

EDGAR ALLAN POE

To Helen

To the English editor-critic, John M. Robertson, this is One of the most ripely perfect and spiritually charming poems ever written. . . . Not only has it Horace's fastidiousness of touch, but the transfiguring aerial charm of pure poetry. . . . The two closing lines of the middle stanza have passed into the body of choice distillations of language reserved for immortality."

HELEN, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicæan barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Annabel Lee

IT was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love,
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me;
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we,
Of many far wiser than we;

EDGAR ALLAN POE

And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

Ulalume

ULALUME is one of the strange wild poems of the world. It chronicles symbolically a collision between an ignoble passion and the memory of Ulalume, an ideal love. Starte, the goddess of plain animal pleasure, urges the hero to accept a mere carnal union, while Psyche (his higher self) protests and urges flight from gross temptation. Edmund Clarence Stedman pronounces this poem "so strange, so unlike anything that preceded it, so vague and yet so full of meaning, that of itself it might establish a new method. To me it seems an improvisation, such as a violinist might play upon the instrument which had become his one thing of worth after the death of a companion and left him alone with his own soul."

THE skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crisp'd and sere,
The leaves they were withering and sere;
'T was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;

EDGAR ALLAN POE

It was night by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir:
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll,
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole,
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere,
Our memories were treacherous and sere,
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year,
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)

We noted not the dim lake of Auber
(Though once we had journeyed down here),
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
And star-dials pointed to morn,
As the star-dials hinted of morn,
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn,
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs,
She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies,
To the Lethean peace of the skies:
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes:
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust,
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
Hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings until they trailed in the dust;
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust,
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

She replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:
Let us on by this tremulous light!
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
Its sibyllic splendor is beaming
With hope and in beauty to-night:
See, it flickers up the sky through the night!
Hence, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
And be sure it will lead us aright:
Hence safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom,
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb,
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—
'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crisp'd and sere,
As the leaves that were withering and sere,
And I cried—"It was surely October
On this very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here,
That I brought a dread burden down here:
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber
This misty mid region of Weir:
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoulish-woodland of Weir."

Israfel

*And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and
who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.*

—Koran.

IN Heaven a spirit doth dwell
Whose heart-strings are a lute;
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
Of his voice, all mute.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Tottering above

In her highest noon,

The enamored moon

Blushes with love,

While, to listen, the red levin

(With the rapid Pleiads, even,

Which were seven)

Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir

And the other listening things)

That Israfele's fire

Is owing to that lyre

By which he sits and sings—

The trembling living wire

Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,

Where deep thoughts are a duty,

Where Love's a grown-up God,

Where the Houri glances are

Imbued with all the beauty

Which we worship in a star.

Therefore thou art not wrong,

Israfele, who despisest

An unimpassioned song;

To thee the laurels belong,

Best bard, because the wisest:

Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above

With thy burning measures suit:

Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,

With the fervor of thy lute:

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Well may the stars be mute!
Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sour;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfil
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

The Haunted Palace

IN the greenest of our valleys,
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion
It stood there:
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow;
(This, all this was in the olden
Time, long ago);
And every gentle air that dallied
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A winged odor, went away.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Wanderers in that happy valley,
Through two luminous windows, saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tuned law,
Round about a throne where sitting,
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of echoes whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things in robes of sorrow
Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)

And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travellers now within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows, see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While, like a rapid, ghastly river,
Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Lenore

Never before in American literature was such a fountain of melody flung into the air as we sense in this wondrous lyric. It is a creation of the higher magic. But in the second stanza, we have an incongruous clause—"she feebly in feeble health." It is a mud-ball on the front of the rainbow.

AH, broken is the golden bowl, the spirit flown forever!

Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river.

And, Guy de Vere, hast thou no tear?—weep now or never more?

See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy loved Lenore!

Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral song—
be sung—

An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young.

Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her
for her pride,

And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her—
that she died!

How shall the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem how
be sung

By you—by yours, the evil eye—by yours, the slanderous
tongue

That did to death the innocence that died, and died so
young?

Peccavimus; but rave not thus, and let a Sabbath song
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no wrong

EDGAR ALLAN POE

the sweet Lenore hath "gone before," with Hope that
flew beside,
saying thee wild for the dear child that should have
been thy bride—
For her, the fair and *debonnaire*, that now so lowly lies,
the life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes—
the life still there, upon her hair—the death upon her
eyes.

Daunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I
upraise,
that waft the angel on her flight with a pæan of old
days!
that no bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its hal-
lowed mirth,
should catch the note as it doth float up from the
damnèd Earth.
From friends above, from fiends below, the indignant ghost
is riven—
From Hell up to a high estate far up within the
Heaven—
From grief and groan to a golden throne beside the
King of Heaven.

The Sleeper

AT midnight, in the month of June
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain-top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin moulders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
Irene, with her destinies!

O lady bright! can it be right,
This window open to the night?
The wanton airs from the tree-top
Laughingly through the lattice drop;
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully, so fearfully,
Above the closed and fringed lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall.
O lady dear, hast thou no fear?
Why and what art thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor; strange thy dress;
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps. Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,

EDGAR ALLAN POE

I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with unopened eye,
While the pale sheeted ghosts go by.

My love, she sleeps. Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep!
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold:
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And wingèd panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls
Of her grand family funerals;
Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone;
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin,
It was the dead who groaned within!

The City in the Sea

*Of this poem John M. Robertson says, "With unwaning
evidence the unearthly vision burns itself tremorless upon
the void, till it is almost with a shudder of relief that the
well-bound reader comes to the close."*

O! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently,
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free:
Up domes, up spires, up kingly halls,
Up fanes, up Babylon-like walls,
Up shadowy, long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers,
Up many and many a marvellous shrine,
Whose wreathèd friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye,—
Not the gaily-jewelled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas,
Along that wilderness of glass;

EDGAR ALLAN POE

No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea;
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene!

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
A slightly sinking, the dull tide;
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven!
The waves have now a redder glow,
The hours are breathing faint and low;
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

The Raven

These famous verses possess what Baudelaire calls "That extraordinary elevation, that exquisite delicacy, that accent of immortality which Edgar Allan Poe exacts of the Muse."

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered,
Weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten
lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a
tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber
door.
'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber
door:
Only this, and nothing more."

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow; vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain,
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,
“’Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door:
This it is, and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger: hesitating then no longer,
“Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is, I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened wide the door;—
Darkness there, and nothing more!

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there,
wondering, fearing,
doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to
dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the darkness gave no
token,
and the only word there spoken was the whispered word
"Lenore!"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word
"Lenore!"
Merely this, and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me
burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping, somewhat louder than
before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my win-
dow-lattice;
Let me see then what thereat is, and this mystery ex-
plore—
Let my heart be still a moment, and this mystery
explore;—
'Tis the wind, and nothing more!"

Open then I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt
and flutter,
there stepped a stately raven of the saintly days of
yore.
Not the least obeisance made he; not an instant stopped
or stayed he;
Ut, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my cham-
ber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas, just above my chamber
door—
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into
smiling,

By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it
wore,

"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said,
"art sure no craven;

Ghastly, grim, and ancient raven, wandering from the
nightly shore!

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the night's Plu-
tonian shore!"

Quoth the raven, "Nevermore!"

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse
so plainly,

Though its answer little meaning—little relevance
bore;

For we cannot help agreeing that no living human
being

Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber
door—

Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his cham-
ber door,

With such name as "Nevermore!"

But the raven sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke
only

That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did
outpour.

Nothing further then he uttered—not a feather then he
fluttered—

Till I scarcely more than muttered, "Other friends have
flown before—

On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my hopes have
flown before."

Then the bird said, "Nevermore!"

EDGAR ALLAN POE

startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly
spoken,
Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and
store,
taught from some unhappy master, whom unmerciful
disaster
followed fast and followed faster, till his songs one
burden bore—
till the dirges of his hope one melancholy burden
bore,
Of—"Never—nevermore!"

But—the raven still beguiling all my sad soul into
smiling—
straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and
bust, and door;
then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to
linking
fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of
yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous
bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore!"

Thus I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable ex-
pressing
to the fowl, whose fiery eyes now burned into my
bosom's core;
thus and more I sat divining, with my head at ease
reclining
on the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light
gloated o'er,
but whose velvet violet lining, with the lamp-light gloat-
ing o'er,
She shall press—ah! nevermore!

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Then methought the air grew denser, perfumed from an
unseen censer,

Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the
tufted floor.

"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these
angels he hath sent thee

Respite—respite and nepenthe from the memories of
Lenore!

Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this loss
Lenore!"

Quoth the raven, "Nevermore!"

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or
devil!

Whether tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee
here ashore,

Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—

In this home by horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—

Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me,
implore!"

Quoth the raven, "Nevermore!"

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or
devil!

By that heaven that bends above us—by that God we
both adore,

Tell this soul with sorrow laden, if, within the distant
Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden, whom the angels name
Lenore;

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden, whom the angels name
Lenore!"

Quoth the raven, "Nevermore!"

EDGAR ALLAN POE

"That word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting—

Get thee back into the tempest and the night's Plutonian shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"

Quoth the raven, "Nevermore!"

And the raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting

On the pallid bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door;

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,

And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;

And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor

Shall be lifted—*nevermore!*

A. B. STREET

1811—1881

The Settler: America in the Making

HIS echoing ax the settler swung
Amid the sea-like solitude,
And rushing, thundering, down were flung
The Titans of the wood;
Loud shrieked the eagle as he dashed
From out his mossy nest, which crashed
With its supporting bough,
And the first sunlight, leaping, flashed
On the wolf's haunt below.

Rude was the garb, and strong the frame,
Of him who plied his ceaseless toil:
To form that garb, the wild-wood game
Contributed their spoil;
The soul that warmed that frame, disdained
The tinsel, gaud, and glare, that reigned
Where men their crowds collect;
The simple fur, untrimmed, unstained,
This forest tamer decked.

The paths which wound 'mid gorgeous trees,
The stream whose bright lips kissed their flowers,
The winds that swelled their harmonies
Through these sun-hiding bowers,
The temple vast, the green arcade,
The nestling vale, the grassy glade,
Dark cave, and swampy lair;
These scenes and sounds majestic, made
His world, his pleasures, there.

A. B. STREET

His roof adorned a pleasant spot,
'Mid the black logs green glowed the grain,
And herbs and plants the woods knew not,
Throve in the sun and rain.
The smoke-wreath curling o'er the dell,
The low, the bleat, the tinkling bell,
All made a landscape strange,
Which was the living chronicle
Of deeds that wrought the change.

The violet sprung at Spring's first tinge,
The rose of summer spread its glow,
The maize hung out its Autumn fringe,
Rude Winter brought his snow;
And still the lone one labored there,
His shout and whistle woke the air,
As cheerily he plied
His garden spade, or drove his share
Along the hillock's side.

He marked the fire-storm's blazing flood
Roaring and crackling on its path,
And scorching earth and melting wood,
Beneath its greedy wrath;
He marked the rapid whirlwind shoot,
Trampling the pine tree with its foot,
And darkening thick the day
With streaming bough and severed root,
Hurled whizzing on its way.

His gaunt hound yelled, his rifle flashed,
The grim bear hushed his savage growl,
In blood and foam the panther gnashed
His fangs with dying howl;

A. B. STREET

The fleet deer ceased its flying bound,
Its snarling wolf-foe bit the ground,
And with its moaning cry,
The beaver sank beneath the wound,
Its pond-built Venice by.

Humble the lot, yet his the race,
When liberty sent forth her cry,
Who thronged in conflict's deadliest place,
To fight, to bleed, to die;
Who cumbered Bunker's height of red,
By hope through weary years were led,
And witnessed Yorktown's sun
Blaze on a nation's banner spread,
A nation's freedom won.

FRANCES SARGEANT OSGOOD
1811—1850

Celeste Dancing

SHE comes!—the spirit of the dance!
And but for those large eloquent eyes,
Where passion speaks in every glance,
She'd seem a wanderer from the skies.

So light that, gazing breathless there,
Lest the celestial dream should go,
You'd think the music in the air
Waved the fair vision to and fro.

FRANCES SARGEANT OSGOOD

Or think the melody's sweet flow
Within the radiant creature played,
And those soft wreathing arms of snow
And white sylph feet the music made.

Now gliding slow with dreamy grace,
Her eyes beneath their lashes lost,
Now motionless, with lifted face,
And small hands on her bosom crossed.

And now with flashing eyes she springs:—
Her whole bright figure raised in air,
As if her soul had spread its wings:
And poised her one wild instant there!

She spoke not—but, so richly fraught
With language are her glance and smile,
That, when the curtain fell, I thought
She had been talking all the while.

CHRISTOPHER PEARSE CRANCH

1813—1892

Thought

THOUGHT is deeper than all speech,
Feeling deeper than all thought;
Souls to souls can never teach
What unto themselves was taught.

We are spirits clad in veils;
Man by man was never seen;
All our deep communing fails
To remove the shadowy screen.

CHRISTOPHER PEARSE CRANCH

Heart to heart was never known;
Mind with mind did never meet;
We are columns left alone
Of a temple once complete.

Like the stars that gem the sky,
Far apart, though seeming near,
In our light we scattered lie;
All is thus but starlight here.

What is social company
But a babbling summer stream?
What our wise philosophy
But the glancing of a dream?

Only when the sun of love
Melts the scattered stars of thought,
Only when we live above
What the dim-eyed world hath taught,

Only when our souls are fed
By the fount which gave them birth,
And by inspiration led
Which they never drew from earth,

We, like parted drops of rain,
Swelling till they meet and run,
Shall be all absorbed again,
Melting, flowing into one.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

1819—1891

LOWELL, in his time, was not only America's greatest all-around poet and farthest-reaching critic, but he was also a wise citizen with an international outlook. He reached manhood soon after Emerson had opened for the portals of the larger thought, and when Garrison had begun the fight for the liberty of the Southern slaves; and Lowell joined with a will in the effort to rouse America to make way for the freedom and divinity of man. He trumpeted his ringing call:

"They are slaves who dare not speak
For the fallen and the weak:
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three!"

In 1848, Lowell's wonderful year, he published three of his memorable works—*The Biglow Papers* (first series), *Fable for Critics* and *The Vision of Sir Launfal*. *The Biglow Papers*, a humorous satire against slavery, was an original contribution to literature, picturing the New England Yankee with his quaint twang, his homely wisdom, his shrewd humor, and his inborn sense of justice. Unlike Swift and the earlier satirists, Lowell projects passages of real beauty into the plain pithy argument. *The Commemoration Ode* celebrates the final aspect of the brother struggle, but with solemn music and lofty thought. *Fable for Critics* is a headlong humorous poem, touching off the authors of his time, with many judgments still looked upon as just. *Sir Launfal* weaves one of the old legends into an enduring parable, which identifies the service of humanity with the service of God. The summer and the winter scenes of this poem are stamped with the quality of beauty.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

From "She Came and Went"

AS a twig trembles, which a bird
Lights on to sing, then leaves unbent;
So is my memory thrilled and stirred—
I only know she came and went.

As clasp some lake, by gusts unruven,
The blue dome's measureless content;
So my soul held that moment's heaven—
I only know she came and went.

As, at one bound, our swift Spring heaps
The orchards full of bloom and scent;
So clove her May my wintry sleeps—
I only know she came and went.

From "The Present Crisis"

WHEN a deed is done for Freedom, through the
broad earth's aching breast
Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling on from east
to west,
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels the soul within
him climb
To the awful verge of manhood, as the energy sublime
Of a century bursts full-blossomed on the thorny stem
of Time. . . .

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to
decide;
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or
evil side;

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

me great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the
bloom or blight,
arts the goats upon the left hand and the sheep upon
the right,
nd the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and
that light. . . .

areless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but
record
ne death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems
and the Word;
ruth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the
throne—
et that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim
unknown,
andeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above
his own. . . .

y the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I
track,
coiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns
not back,
nd these mounts of anguish number how each genera-
tion learned
ne new word of that grand *Credo* which in prophet-
hearts hath burned
nce the first man stood God-conquered with his face to
heaven upturned.

or humanity sweeps onward: where today the martyr
stands,
n the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his
hands;
ar in front the cross stands ready and the crackling
fagots burn,

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent av
return

To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden
urn.

'Tis as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our fathers' grave
Worshippers of light ancestral make the present light
crime;—

Was the Mayflower launched by cowards, steered by
men behind their time?

Turn those tracks toward Past or Future, that make
Plymouth Rock sublime?

They were men of present valor, stalwart old icons
clasts,

Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue was the
Past's;

But we make their truth our falsehood thinking that
hath made us free,

Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while our tender
spirits flee

The rude grasp of that great Impulse which drove them
across the sea.

They have rights who dare maintain them; we are
traitors to our sires,

Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's new-lit altar
fires;

Shall we make their creed our jailer? Shall we, in our
haste to slay,

From the tombs of the old prophets steal the funeral
lamps away

To light up the martyr-fagots round the prophets of
today?

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

new occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient
good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep
abreast of Truth:
Before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must
Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the
desperate winter sea,
Or attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-
rusted key.

From "After the Burial"

YES, Faith is a goodly anchor
When skies are sweet as a psalm:
It lolls at the bows so stalwart
In bluff, broad-shouldered calm.

And when over breakers to leeward
The tattered surges are hurled,
It may keep our head to the tempest,
With its grip on the base of the world.

Your logic, my friend, is perfect,
Your moral's most drearily true;
But since the earth clashed on *her* coffin,
I keep hearing that, and not you.

Console, if you will; I can bear it;
'Tis a well-meant alms of breath;
But not all the preaching since Adam
Has made Death other than Death.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

It is pagan: but wait till you feel it,
That jar of our earth, that dull shock,
When the ploughshare of deeper passion
Tears down to our primitive rock.

Communion in spirit? Forgive me,
But I, who am earthly and weak,
Would give all my incomes from dreamland
For her rose-leaf palm on my cheek!

That little shoe in the corner,
So worn and wrinkled and brown—
Its emptiness confutes you,
And argues your wisdom down.

What Rabbi Jehosha Said

RABBI JEHOSHA used to say
That God made angels every day,
Perfect as Michael and the rest
First brooded in creation's nest,
Whose only office was to cry
Hosanna! once, and then to die;
Or rather, with Life's essence blent,
To be led home from banishment.
Rabbi Jehosha had the skill
To know that Heaven is in God's will;
And doing that, though for a space
One heart-beat long, may win a grace
As full of grandeur and of glow
As Princes of the Chariot know.

'Twere glorious, no doubt, to be
One of the strong-winged Hierarchy,

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

To burn with Seraphs, or to shine
With Cherubs, deathlessly divine;
Yet I, perhaps, poor earthly clod,
Could I forget myself in God,
Could I but find my nature's clew
Simply as birds and blossoms do,
And but for one rapt moment know
'Tis Heaven must come, not we must go,
Should win my place as near the throne
As the pearl-angel of its zone,
And God would listen mid the throng
For my one breath of perfect song,
That, in its simple human way,
Said all the Host of Heaven could say.

The Street

THEY pass me by like shadows, crowds on crowds,
Dim ghosts of men, that hover to and fro,
ugging their bodies around them, like thin shrouds
Wherein their souls were buried long ago:
They trampled on their youth, and faith, and love,
They cast their hope of human-kind away,
With Heaven's clear messages they madly strove,
And conquered—and their spirits turned to clay:

o! how they wander round the world, their grave,
Whose ever-gaping maw by such is fed,
ibbering at living men, and idly rave,
"We, only, truly live, but ye are dead."
las! poor fools, the anointed eye may trace
dead soul's epitaph in every face!

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

*Prelude to Part First of "The Vision of
Sir Launfal"*

O VER his keys the musing organist,
Beginning doubtfully and far away,
First lets his fingers wander as they list,
And builds a bridge from Dreamland for his lay
Then, as the touch of his loved instrument
Gives hope and fervor, nearer draws his theme,
First guessed by faint auroral flushes sent
Along the wavering vista of his dream.

Not only around our infancy
Doth heaven with all its splendors lie;
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb and know it not.

Over our manhood bend the skies;
Against our fallen and traitor lives
The great winds utter prophecies;
With our faint hearts the mountain strives;
Its arms outstretched, the Druid wood
Waits with its benedicite;
And to our age's drowsy blood
Still shouts the inspiring sea.

Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us;
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the Devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking:
'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking;
No price is set on the lavish summer;
None may be had by the poorest comer.

And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays;
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's palace;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
And lets his illumined being o'errun
With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings
He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest,—
In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,
And whatever of life hath ebbed away
Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;
Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,
We are happy now because God wills it;
No matter how barren the past may have been,
'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green,

We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing;
The breeze comes whispering in our ear,
That dandelions are blossoming near,

That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing
That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack;

We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing,—
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
Tells all in his lusty crowing!

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now,

Everything is upward striving;
'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue,—
'Tis the natural way of living:

Who knows whither the clouds have fled?

In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake;
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,

The heart forgets its sorrow and ache;
The soul partakes the season's youth,

And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Like burnt-out craters healed with snow.
What wonder if Sir Launfal now
Remembered the keeping of his vow?

Winter Pictures

FROM "THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL"

DOWN swept the chill wind from the mountain
peak,
From the snow five thousand summers old;
Open wold and hill-top bleak
It had gathered all the cold,
And whirled it like sleet on the wanderer's cheek;
It carried a shiver everywhere
From the unleaved boughs and pastures bare;
The little brook heard it and built a roof
Of ice which he could house him, winter-proof;
At night by the white stars' frosty gleams
He groined his arches and matched his beams;
Tender and clear were his crystal spars
And the lashes of light that trim the stars:
He sculptured every summer delight
From his halls and chambers out of sight;
Sometimes his tinkling waters slipt
Down through a frost-leaved forest-crypt,
Along, sparkling aisles of steel-stemmed trees
Responding to counterfeit a breeze;
Sometimes the roof no fretwork knew
But silvery mosses that downward grew;
Sometimes it was carved in sharp relief
With quaint arabesques of ice-fern leaf;
Sometimes it was simply smooth and clear
For the gladness of heaven to shine through, and here
He had caught the nodding bulrush-tops

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

And hung them thickly with diamond drops,
Which crystaled the beams of moon and sun,
And made a star of every one:

No mortal builder's most rare device
Could match this winter-palace of ice;
'Twas as if every image that mirrored lay
In his depths serene through the summer day,
Each flitting shadow of earth and sky,
Lest the happy model should be lost,
Had been mimicked in fairy masonry
By the elfin builders of the frost.

Within the hall are song and laughter,
The cheeks of Christmas glow red and jolly,
And sprouting is every corbel and rafter
With the lightsome green of ivy and holly;
Through the deep gulf of the chimney wide
Wallows the Yule-log's roaring tide;
The broad flame-pennons droop and flap
And belly and tug as a flag in the wind;
Like a locust shrills the imprisoned sap,
Hunted to death in its galleries blind;
And swift little troops of silent sparks,
Now pausing, now scattering away as in fear,
Go threading the soot-forest's tangled darks
Like herds of startled deer.

But the wind without was eager and sharp,
Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a harp,
And rattles and wrings
The icy strings,
Singing, in dreary monotone,
A Christmas carol of its own,
Whose burden still, as he might guess,
Was—"Shelterless, shelterless, shelterless!"
The voice of the seneschal flared like a torch

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

He shouted the wanderer away from the porch,
And he sat in the gateway and saw all night
The great hall-fire, so cheery and bold,
Through the window-slits of the castle old,
Gild out its piers of ruddy light
Against the drift of the cold.

* * * * *

There was never a leaf on bush or tree,
The bare boughs rattled shudderingly;
The river was dumb and could not speak,
For the frost's swift shuttles its shroud had spun;
A single crow on the tree-top bleak
From his shining feathers shed off the cold sun;
Again it was morning, but shrunk and cold,
As if her veins were sapless and old,
And she rose up decrepitly
For a last dim look at earth and sea.

From "What Mr. Robinson Thinks"

GINERAL C. is a drestle smart man:
He's ben on all sides thet give places or pelf;
But consistency still wuz a part of his plan—
He's ben true to *one* party—an' thet is himself;
So John P.
Robinson, he
Sez he shall vote fer Ginerall C.

We were gittin' on nicely up here to our village,
With good old idees o' wut's right an' wut ain't,
The kind o' thought Christ went agin war an' pillage,
An' thet eppyletts worn't the best mark of a saint;
But John P.
Robinson, he
Sez this kind o' thing's an exploded idee.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argimunts lies;
Sez they're nothin' on airth but just fee, faw, fum:
An' thet all this big talk of our destinies
Is half on it ign'ance, an' t'other half rum;
But John P.
Robinson, he
Sez it ain't no sech thing; an', of course, so must v

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in his life
Thet th' apostles rigg'd out in their swaller-tail coa
An' march'd round in front of a drum an' a fife,
To git some on 'em office, an' some on 'em votes;
But John P.
Robinson, he
Sez they didn't know everythin' down in Judee.

Wal, it's a marcy we've gut folks to tell us
The rights and the wrongs o' these matters, I vow,
God sends country lawyers, an' other wise fellers,
To start the world's team when it gits in a slough;
Fer John P.
Robinson, he
Sez the world'll go right ef he hollers out Gee!

THOMAS WILLIAM PARSONS

1819—1892

On a Bust of Dante

SEE, from this counterfeit of him
Whom Arno shall remember long,
How stern of lineament, how grim,
The father was of Tuscan song:
There but the burning sense of wrong,
Perpetual care and scorn, abide;
Small friendship for the lordly throng;
Distrust of all the world beside.

Faithful if this wan image be,
No dream his life was—but a fight!
Could any Beatrice see
A lover in that anchorite?
To that cold Ghibelline's gloomy sight
Who could have guessed the visions came
Of Beauty, veiled with heavenly light,
In circles of eternal flame?

The lips as Cumæ's cavern close,
The cheeks with fast and sorrow thin,
The rigid front, almost morose,
But for the patient hope within,
Declare a life whose course hath been
Unsullied still, though still severe,
Which, through the wavering days of sin,
Kept itself icy-chaste and clear.

THOMAS WILLIAM PARSONS

Not wholly such his haggard look
When wandering once, forlorn, he strayed,
With no companion save his book,
To Corvo's hushed monastic shade;
Where, as the Benedictine laid
His palm upon the convent's guest,
The single boon for which he prayed
Was peace, that pilgrim's one request.

Peace dwells not here,—this rugged face
Betrays no spirit of repose;
The sullen warrior sole we trace,
The marble man of many woes.
Such was his mien when first arose
The thought of that strange tale divine,
When hell he peopled with his foes,
Dread scourge of many a guilty line.

War to the last he waged with all
The tyrant canker-worms of earth:
Baron and duke, in hold and hall,
Cursed the dark hour that gave him birth;
He used Rome's harlot for his mirth;
Plucked bare hypocrisy and crime;
But valiant souls of knightly worth
Transmitted to the rolls of Time.

O Time! whose verdicts mock our own,
The only righteous judge art thou;
That poor old exile, sad and lone,
Is Latium's other Virgil now:
Before his name the nations bow;
His words are parcel of mankind,
Deep in whose hearts, as on his brow,
The marks have sunk of Dante's mind.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

1817—1862

I LOVE Henry," a friend of Thoreau is reported as saying, "but I cannot like him; and as for taking his arm, I would as soon think of taking the arm of an elm-tree." Nevertheless, at Thoreau's death in 1862, Emerson said: "The country knows not yet, in the least part, how great a loss it has lost." Thoreau is essentially a writer of prose, a poet in thought and feeling rather than in expression. His poetry is not the kind that will lift the reader on any poetic wing of exaltation; but it appeals to the inner spirit, like the nobler lines of Wordsworth. It brings with it no pomp and fife; it expresses, instead, the rapture and fervor and ecstasy of the still, small voice. Thoreau never wrote a line which he did not believe to be true, and many of his pages shine with a superior fire of the spirit. Turn to his *Miscellanies*, for instance, and read his exalted essay on *Life without Principle*.

From "Inspiration"

IF with light head erect I sing,
Though all the Muses lend their force,
From my poor love of anything,
The verse is weak and shallow as its source.

But if with bended neck I grope
Listening behind me for my wit,
With faith superior to hope,
More anxious to keep back than forward it—

Making my soul accomplice there
Unto the flame my heart hath lit,
Then will the verse forever wear—
Time cannot bend the line which God has writ.

I will not doubt the love untold
Which not my worth nor want hath bought,
Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,
And to this evening hath me brought.

WALT WHITMAN

1819—1892

WRITING to Whitman in 1855, not long after the first appearance of *Leaves of Grass*, Emerson declared "the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom that America has yet contributed." But this historic volume was received with both cheers and jeers. "Whitman," said Edmund Gosse, "is without thought, without composition, evolution or vertebration of style." Yet Gosse's countrywoman, Anne Gilchrist, found in Whitman "great meanings and great emotions expressed with corresponding power." John Addington Symonds found in him "Behemoth wallowing in primeval jungles." John Burroughs found him "the most significant and imposing figure in our literary annals." And our own John Jay Chapman slams in these charges: "Whitman was a *poseur*, a most horrid mountebank and egomaniac. . . . He has filled his work with grimace and vulgarity. . . . He writes a few lines of epic directness and cyclopean vigor, and then obtrudes himself and his mission."

Thus one group criticizes and the other group canonizes. I think we will find the truth somewhere between the two contending groups. Whitman is not all flawless and starry—neither is he all peccable and pedestrian. He is like a storm-built mountain wherein you will find storm and stubble of the earth—also precious fragments fall from the stars.

Whitman's catalogues are tedious; but, more than that, his philosophy is frequently unsound. He says, "Live your instincts," when our instincts are frequently lustful and lawless. He says that there is no difference between good and evil, for all is good—a doctrine that destroys moral distinctions. If Whitman is right, then Jesus Christ was wrong. Whitman makes little or nothing of the new

WALT WHITMAN

for spiritual battle, a thing insisted on by Jesus. The whole diameter of being separates *The Gospels* from the *Song of Myself*.

But there are moments when Whitman utters in lofty language a lofty idea; and there are other moments (as in *Carol to Death*) when he rises to the lyric heights. These moments place him among the great poets.

The Great City

THE place where a great city stands is not the place of stretched wharves, docks, manufactures, deposits of produce merely;

nor the place of ceaseless salutes of new-comers, or the anchor-lifters of the departing;

nor the place of the tallest and costliest buildings or shops selling goods from the rest of the earth;

nor the place of the best libraries and schools, nor the place where money is plentiest,

nor the place of the most numerous population.

Where the city stands with the brawniest breed of orators and bards;

Where the city stands that is beloved by these, and loves them in return and understands them;

Where no monuments exist to heroes but in the common words and deeds;

Where thrift is in its place, and prudence is in its place;

Where the men and women think lightly of the laws;

Where the slave ceases, and the master of slaves ceases;

Where the populace rise at once against the never-ending audacity of elected persons;

Where fierce men and women pour forth, as the sea to the whistle of death pours its sweeping and unript waves;

WALT WHITMAN

Where the city of the faithfulest friends stands;
Where the city of the cleanliness of the sexes stands;
Where the city of the healthiest fathers stands;
Where the city of the best bodied mothers stands—
There the great city stands.

O Captain! My Captain!

Abraham Lincoln: 1809-1865

O CAPTAIN, my Captain! our fearful trip is done
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize w
sought is won,

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and
daring.

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the bleeding drops of red,

Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain, my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugl
trills,

For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths—for you the
shores a-crowding—

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces
turning.

Here Captain, dear father!

This arm beneath your head!

It is some dream that on the deck

You've fallen cold and dead. . . .

WALT WHITMAN

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor
will,
The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed
and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object
won.
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I, with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

*From "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard
Bloom'd"*

The Lincoln death-chant.

WHEN lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd,
And the great star early droop'd in the western
sky in the night,
mourn'd, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning
spring.

ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,
lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,
and thought of him I love.

O powerful western fallen star!
O shades of night—O moody, tearful night!
O great star disappear'd—O the black murk that hides
the star!
O cruel hands that hold me powerless—O helpless soul
of me!
O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul.

WALT WHITMAN

In the swamp in secluded recesses,
A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.

Solitary the thrush,
The hermit withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,
Sings by himself a song.

From deep secluded recesses,
From the fragrant cedars and the ghostly pines so still
Came the carol of the bird.

And the charm of the carol rapt me,
As I held as if by their hands my comrades in the night
And the voice of my spirit tallied the song of the bird

*Come lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.*

*Prais'd be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious
And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.*

*Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come
come unfalteringly.*

*Approach strong deliveress,
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously
sing the dead,*

WALT WHITMAN

most in the loving floating ocean of thee,
waved in the flood of thy bliss, O death.

From me to thee glad serenades,
Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, adornments and
feastings for thee,
and the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread
sky are fitting,
and life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful
night.

The night in silence under many a star,
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose
voice I know,
And the soul turning to thee O vast and well-veil'd
death,
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields
and the prairies wide,
Over the dense-pack'd cities all and the teeming wharves
and ways,
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee, O death!

The Mocking-Bird

From "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking."

ONCE, Paumanok,
When the snows had melted, and the Fifth-
month grass was growing,
Up this sea-shore, in some briers,
Two guests from Alabama—two together,

WALT WHITMAN

And their nest, and four light-green eggs, spotted with
brown,
And every day the he-bird, to and fro, near at hand,
And every day the she-bird, crouched on her nest, silent
with bright eyes,
And every day I, a curious boy, never too close, never
disturbing them,
Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.

Shine! shine! shine!
Pour down your warmth, great Sun!
While we bask—we two together.

Two together!
Winds blow south, or winds blow north,
Day come white, or night come black,
Home, or rivers and mountains from home,
Singing all time, minding no time,
If we two but keep together.

Till, of a sudden,
Maybe killed, unknown to her mate,
One forenoon the she-bird crouched not on the nest,
Nor returned that afternoon, nor the next,
Nor ever appeared again.

And thenceforward, all summer, in the sound of the
sea,
And at night, under the full of the moon, in calmer
weather,
Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,
I saw, I heard at intervals, the remaining one, the
he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama.

WALT WHITMAN

Blow! blow! blow!

*Blow up, sea-winds, along Paumanok's shore!
Wait and I wait, till you blow my mate to me.*

*Yes, when the stars glistened,
Night long, on the prong of a moss-scalloped stake,
Down, almost amid the slapping waves,
The lone singer, wonderful, causing tears.*

*He called on his mate;
He poured forth the meanings which I, of all men,
Know:*

* * * * *

Soothe! soothe! soothe!

*Se on its wave soothes the wave behind,
And again another behind, embracing and lapping, every
One close,
My love soothes not me, not me.*

*Now hangs the moon—it rose late.
It is lagging—Oh, I think it is heavy with love,
With love.*

*Oh, madly the sea pushes, pushes upon the land,
With love—with love.*

*O night! do I not see my love fluttering out there
Among the breakers?
What is that little black thing I see there in the white?*

*Loud! loud! loud!
And I call to you, my love!
Oh and clear I shoot my voice over the waves;*

WALT WHITMAN

*Surely you must know who is here, is here;
You must know who I am, my love!*

*Low-hanging moon!
What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?
Oh, it is the shape, the shape of my mate!
O moon, do not keep her from me any longer.*

*Land! land! O land!
Whichever way I turn, Oh, I think you could give
my mate back again, if you only would;
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way
look.*

*O rising stars!
Perhaps the one I want so much will rise, will rise with
some of you.*

*O throat! O trembling throat!
Sound clearer through the atmosphere!
Pierce the woods, the earth;
Somewhere listening to catch you, must be the one
want.*

*Shake out, carols!
Solitary here—the night's carols!
Carols of lonesome love! Death's carols!
Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!
Oh, under that moon, where she droops almost down
into the sea!
O reckless, despairing carols!*

*But soft! sink low;
Soft! let me just murmur;
And do you wait a moment, you husky-noised sea;*

WALT WHITMAN

*... somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding
to me,
faint—I must be still, be still to listen;
... not altogether still, for then she might not come
immediately to me.*

*Hither, my love!
... I am! Here!
... with this just-sustained note I announce myself to
you;
... this gentle call is for you, my love, for you.*

*Do not be decoyed elsewhere!
... that is the whistle of the wind—it is not my voice;
... that is the fluttering, the fluttering of the spray;
... those are the shadows of leaves.*

*O darkness! Oh, in vain!
... h, I am very sick and sorrowful!*

From "Song of Myself"

THE SONG OF MYSELF is one of Walt Whitman's most characteristic poems. It contains the essence of his philosophy. ... love the swing and the stride of some of his long resounding lines.

*[CELEBRATE myself, and sing myself;
And what I assume you shall assume,
... or every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.
... loaf and invite my soul,
... lean and loaf at my ease observing a spear of summer
grass.
... My tongue, every atom of my blood, formed from this
soil, this air,*

WALT WHITMAN

Born here of parents born here from parents the same
and their parents the same,

I, (now thirty-seven years old in perfect health) begin
Hoping to cease not till death.

I hail for good or bad, I permit to speak at every
hazard,

Nature without check, with original energy.

Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?
Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess
the origin of all poems:

You shall possess the good of the earth and sun (there
are millions of suns left)

You shall no longer take things at second or third hand
nor look through the eyes of the dead, nor feed
the specters in books.

You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take
things from me:

You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your
self.

A child said, "*What is the grass?*" fetching it to me
with full hands.

How could I answer the child? I do not know what
is any more than he.

I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of
hopeful green stuff woven.

Or, I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,
A scented gift and remembrance designedly dropped,
Bearing the owner's name some way in the corners, that
we may see and remark, and say, "*Whose?*"

The runaway slave came to my house and stopped outside:
side:

I heard his motions crackling the twigs of the woodpile

WALT WHITMAN

rough the swung half-door of the kitchen, I saw him
limpsy and weak,
d went where he sat on a log and led him in and
assured him,
d brought water and fill'd a tub for his sweated body
and bruis'd feet,
d gave him a room that entered from my own, and
gave him some coarse clean clothes,
d remember perfectly well his revolving eyes and his
awkwardness,
d remember putting plasters on the galls of his neck
and ankles.
e staid with me a week before he was recuperated and
passed north:
d him sit next me at table, my firelock lean'd in the
corner.

am the poet of the woman the same as the man;
d I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man,
d I say there is nothing greater than the mother of
men.

understand the large hearts of heroes,
he courage of present times and all times,
ow the skipper saw the crowded and rudderless wreck
of the steamship, and Death chasing it up and down
the storm,
ow he knuckled tight and gave not back an inch and
was faithful of days and faithful of nights,
d chalked in large letters on a board, "*Be of good
cheer, we will not desert you.*"

ll this I swallow, it tastes good, I like it well, it
becomes mine.
am the man, I suffered, I was there.

WALT WHITMAN

The hounded slave that flags in the race, leans by the
fence blowing, covered with sweat—

I am the hounded slave, I wince at the bite of the dog
Hell and despair are upon me, crack and again crack
the marksmen:

I clutch the rails of the fence, my gore drips, thinned
with the ooze of my skin.

Old age superbly rising! O welcome, ineffable grandeur
of dying days!

See ever so far, there is limitless space outside of the
Count ever so much, there is limitless time around the
My rendezvous is appointed, it is certain,
The Lord will be there and wait till I come on perfect
terms.

The great Camerado, the lover true for whom I pine
will be there.

And whoever walks a furlong without sympathy walks
to his own funeral dressed in his shroud.

And to glance with an eye or show a bean in its position
confounds the learning of all times;

And there is no trade or employment but the young
man following it may become a hero.

And there is no object so soft but it makes a hub for
the wheeled universe.

And I say to any man or woman, "Let your soul stand
cool and composed before a million universes."

I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four
and each moment then:

In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my
own face in the glass:

WALT WHITMAN

find letters from God dropped in the street, and every
one is sign'd by God's name;
and I leave them where they are, for I know that
wheresoever I go,
others will punctually come forever and ever.

I too am not a bit tamed, I too am untranslatable:
I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.

JULIA WARD HOWE

1819—1910

JULIA WARD HOWE was the daughter of a New York banker and the wife of a New England social reformer, with whom she was in hearty accord in furthering public movements in behalf of female suffrage, prison reforms and other causes. Her *Battle Hymn of the Republic* is a great memorial of the Civil War. It was written in 1861, after the author had visited the Union army camps near Washington and had seen the marching of the enthusiastic young soldiers to the song, *John Brown's Body*. Nearly all national songs are prosaic and pedestrian; but this *Battle Hymn* has affinities with that noblest of all national songs, Henley's *England, My England*.

Battle Hymn of the Republic.

MY EYES have seen the glory of the coming of the
Lord,
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of
wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift
sword,

His truth is marching on.

JULIA WARD HOWE

I have seen him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling
camps,
They have builded him an altar in the evening dew and
damps;
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring
lamps,
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of
steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace
shall deal;
Let the hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his
heel,
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call
retreat,
He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment
seat.
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer him! be jubilant, my
feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the
sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me,
As he died to make men holy, let us die to set men free,
While God is marching on.

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY

1819—1895

STORY was a sculptor first, and a poet afterward; but he was a conscientious artist to the end. Following an effort to become a lawyer, as desired by his father, Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story, he turned to sculpture and poetry. Most of his mature life was spent in Rome, where he was long regarded as the foremost of American sculptors. His verse is easy, elevated, correct, but it is the verse of a sculptor with whom form is everything.

From "Cleopatra"

HERE, Charmian, take my bracelets;
They bar with a purple stain
My arms; turn over my pillows—
They are hot where I have lain:
Open the lattice wider,
A gauze o'er my bosom throw,
And let me inhale the odors
That over the garden blow.

I dreamed I was with my Antony
And in his arms I lay;
Ah me! the vision has vanished—
The music has died away.
The flame and the perfume have perished—
As this spiced aromatic pastille
That wound the blue smoke of its odor,
Is now but an ashy hill.

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY

Scatter upon me rose-leaves,
They cool me after my sleep,
And with sandal odors fan me
Till into my veins they creep;
Reach down the lute, and play me
A melancholy tune,
To rhyme with the dream that has vanished,
And the slumbering afternoon.

* * * *

Leave me to gaze at the landscape
Mistily stretching away,
Where the afternoon's opaline tremors
O'er the mountains quivering play
Till the fiercer splendor of sunset
Pours from the west its fire,
And melted, as in a crucible,
Their earthly forms expire;

And the bald blear skull of the desert
With glowing mountains is crowned,
That, burning like molten jewels,
Circle its temples round.
I will lie and dream of the past time,
Æons of thought away,
And through the jungle of memory
Loosen my fancy to play;
When, a smooth and velvety tiger,
Ribbed with yellow and black,
Supple and cushion-footed,
I wandered where never the track
Of a human creature had rustled
The silence of mighty woods,
And, fierce in a tyrannous freedom,
I knew but the law of my moods.
The elephant, trumpeting, started

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY

When he heard my footstep near,
And the spotted giraffes fled wildly
In a yellow cloud of fear.
I sucked in the noontide splendor
Quivering along the glade,
Or yawning, panting, and dreaming,
Basked in the tamarisk shade,
Till I heard my wild mate roaring,
As the shadows of night came on
To brood in the trees' thick branches,
And the shadow of sleep was gone;
Then I roused and roared in answer,
And unsheathed from my cushioned feet
My curving claws, and stretched me
And wandered my mate to greet.
We toyed in the amber moonlight,
Upon the warm flat sand,
And struck at each other our massive arms—
How powerful he was and grand!
His yellow eyes flashed fiercely
As he crouched and gazed at me,
And his quivering tail, like a serpent,
Twitched curving nervously;
Then like a storm he seized me,
With a wild, triumphant cry,
And we met as two clouds in heaven
When the thunders before them fly;
We grappled and struggled together,
For his love, like his rage, was rude;
And his teeth in the swelling folds of my neck
At times, in our play, drew blood.
Often another suitor—
For I was flexile and fair—
Fought for me in the moonlight,
While I lay crouching there,

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY

Till his blood was drained by the desert;
And, ruffled with triumph and power,
He licked me and lay beside me
To breathe him a vast half-hour;
Then down to the fountain we loitered,
Where the antelopes came to drink—
Like a bolt we sprang upon them,
Ere they had time to shrink.
We drank their blood and crushed them,
And tore them limb from limb,
And the hungriest lion doubted
Ere he disputed with him.

That was a life to live for!
Not this weak human life,
With its frivolous, bloodless passions,
Its poor and petty strife!
Come to my arms, my hero,
The shadows of twilight grow,
And the tiger's ancient fierceness
In my veins begins to flow.
Come not cringing to sue me!
Take me with triumph and power,
As a warrior storms a fortress!
I will not shrink or cower.
Come as you came in the desert,
Ere we were women and men,
When the tiger passions were in us,
And love as you loved me then!

AMELIA B. WELBY

1819—1852

Twilight at Sea

THE twilight hours like birds flew by,
As lightly and as free;
Ten thousand stars were in the sky,
Ten thousand on the sea;
For every wave, with dimpled face,
That leaped upon the air,
Had caught a star in its embrace
And held it trembling there.

THOMAS LAKE HARRIS

1823—1908

WILLIAM T. STEAD called Thomas Lake Harris "That marvelous man," adding: "There has been no seer like him since the days of Emanuel Swedenborg." He was for a long time pastor of The Church of the Good Shepherd in New York City, of which Horace Greeley and other distinguished men were members.

Believing that all men and women should organize their social and industrial life in the spirit of the Golden Rule, and believing that spiritual life involves a movement into social brotherhood, Harris, with a band of kindred idealists, organized, in 1861, The Brotherhood of the New Life, a society that, in 1875, moved to a spacious domain of orchard and vineyard near Santa Rosa, California. This was his home until his death.

THOMAS LAKE HARRIS

God Speaks in All Religions

I LOVE the chalace and the pyx,
The altar and the crucifix.
A spirit haunts the aged bowers,
Born from the ashes of the flowers.
What once was holy still retains
Some virtue of the primal days,
Though malice blights and greed profanes,
Though age consumes, though hate betrays—
Symbols that grew long ere the birth
Of Him who was the Light of Earth;
Old as Religion, they endure,
And still to pureness all are pure.

Have we a faith?—One bud is ours,
Plucked from Religion's world of flowers.
Have we a creed?—Therein some ray
Born from the universal day.
Have we a rite?—That owned sincere,
Brings the Eternal Presence near.
The shining clue is in the hand
That leads the soul to Morning Land.

By beads or crucifix I pray
With the hushed crowd, yet not as they.
Conformed to Islam's lowly rite,
Its crescent shows me loftier light.
In the rude fetish I divine
What Christians find in bread and wine.
As Joseph worshipped, I adore
By sphinx and obelisk of yore.
Still, where dread Isis veils her face,
I hail the Mother of the race.

THOMAS LAKE HARRIS

I love the Parsee's quenchless flame:
The sunrise lifts God's hidden name.
I taste the mystic raptures known
Where Buddha's sons the prayer intone.
With mild Samaritans I dwell,
Kneeling as they by Jacob's well.
Where sound the trumpets and the shawms,
From David's faith I gather alms,
And so the loud hosannas swell—
Still God is great in Israel.

All faiths are one when from disguise
And narrowness their spirit flies.
All faiths are one by their ascent,
Piercing the stellar firmament.
All faiths are one in last decline,
Tainting the hearts they should refine.
Each faith is of the all possest,
Since one pure truth holds all the rest.

Are Scriptures all a mortal clod?—
Ay, but each atom holds the God.
Are Scriptures all in vision spun?—
Ay, but the morn-mist holds the sun.
Do Scriptures move before the sight,
Shifting their meanings with the light?
Do they, in mystery and awe,
Disclose but fragments of the Law
Of that pure harmony we trace
In Heaven and nature, time and space?—
Ay, but no man can hold the light
Save as by symbols borne to sight. . . .

Your care, O Mother, mighty yet mild,
Curtains the cradle of the child,

THOMAS LAKE HARRIS

Whose searching hands through darkness prest,
Touch Heaven, and—lo, it is your Breast!

From "Silent Tongue"

In our noisy superficial age, this teacher of the deeper life emphasizes the need of silence as the mystic pool where the white lily of the spirit may expand. He says somewhere:

"Christ cometh, all with meekness shod,
Out of the silences of God."

EXTERIOR speech is oft a curse:
'Tis Folly's child, 'tis Discord's nurse.
The silent rivers deeply flow:
The silent stars for splendor go:
Without a sound, without a sign
The jewels ripen in the mine.
Friend, would you have your mind grow young?
Keep company with Silent Tongue.

Seek not to sound upon the land,
Till words are jewels in your hand.
Keep you your lips to Silence prest,
Till music forms within the breast;
And from the still delights are born
Words, that are lovely as the Morn.

Be not for speech untimely bold:
Learn by the love your thoughts to hold;
And when they seek the outer airs,
Make them as holy as your prayers.

THOMAS LAKE HARRIS

From "Sentences of Wisdom"

WHEN Love cools down, ice forms upon the heart:

The fairy singing birds must then depart.

He who derides his comrades' useful powers
Goes like a pig, who roots among the flowers.

Lord Jesus looks, and leaves the bosom's door
When criticism has gone in before.

When men no more dwell in the Social Hall
But shun each other, they from God must fall.

Insociation is the test of grace:
Hearts fold the neighbor, who their Lord embrace.

This Honey Jar stands high on Wisdom's shelf,
'Love the dear neighbor better than the self.'

BAYARD TAYLOR

1825—1878

TAYLOR wrote voluminously in both verse and prose, but it is probable that no product of his pen will remain longer in memory than his simple *Bedouin Song*. The word eloquence sums up the dominant quality of his poetry. He cites some of the poetry of Taylor to show that imagination and eloquence may go together.

Bedouin Song

FROM the Desert I come to thee
On a stallion shod with fire;
And the winds are left behind
In the speed of my desire.

BAYARD TAYLOR

Under thy window I stand,
And the midnight hears my cry:
I love thee, I love but thee,
With a love that shall not die
*Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!*

Look from thy window and see
My passion and my pain;
I lie on the sands below,
And I faint in thy disdain.
Let the night-winds touch thy brow
With the heat of my burning sigh,
And melt thee to hear the vow
Of a love that shall not die
*Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!*

My steps are nightly driven,
By the fever in my breast,
To hear from thy lattice breathed
The word that shall give me rest.
Open the door of thy heart,
And open thy chamber door,
And my kisses shall teach thy lips
The love that shall fade no more
*Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!*

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

1825—1903

STODDARD is the exponent of retrospective sorrow and gentle melancholy. Somber themes generally suit him; yet even in his mourning over *The Flight of Youth*, there is a note of warm, quick feeling. The gap between the best and worst is a wide one. But his five-hundred pages of collected poems are freighted with jewels of observation, reflection, fancy, and occasional glints of the poetic imagination.

The Flight of Youth

THERE are gains for all our losses,
There are balms for all our pain:
But when youth, the dream, departs,
It takes something from our hearts,
And it never comes again.

We are stronger, and are better,
Under manhood's sterner reign:
Still we feel that something sweet
Followed youth, with flying feet,
And will never come again.

Something beautiful is vanished,
And we sigh for it in vain:
We behold it everywhere,
On the earth, and in the air,
But it never comes again.

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

The Dying Lover

THE grass that is under me now
Will soon be over me, Sweet:
When you walk this way again,
I shall not hear your feet.

You may walk this way again
And shed your tears like dew:
They will be no more to me then
Than mine are now to you.

JOHN T. TROWBRIDGE

1827—1916

HIS *The Vagabonds* is a universal favorite at fireside and on platform; and his *Darius Green and His Flying Machine* (1870) proved him to have been unconsciously a prophet with honor.

The Vagabonds

WE are two travelers, Roger and I.
Roger's my dog:—come here, you scamp!
Jump for the gentlemen—mind your eye!
Over the table—look out for the lamp!—
The rogue is growing a little old;
Five years we've tramped through wind and weather
And slept out-doors when nights were cold,
And ate and drank—and starved together.

JOHN T. TROWBRIDGE

I've learned what comfort is, I tell you!
A bed on the floor, a bit of rosin,
Fire to thaw our thumbs (poor fellow!
The paw he holds up there's been frozen),
A bit of catgut for my fiddle
(This out-door business is bad for the strings),
And a few nice buckwheats hot from the griddle,
And Roger and I set up for kings!

Yes, thank ye, sir,—I never drink;
Roger and I are exceedingly moral—
Isn't we, Roger?—see him wink!—
Well, something hot, then—we won't quarrel.
He's thirsty too—see him nod his head?
What a pity, sir, that dogs can't talk!
He understands every word that's said—
And he knows good milk from water-and-chalk.

The truth is, sir, now I reflect,
I've been so sadly given to grog,
Wonder I've not lost the respect
(Here's to you, sir!) even of my dog.
That he sticks by through thick and thin;
And this old coat, with its empty pockets,
And rags that smell of tobacco and gin,
He'll follow while he has eyes in his sockets.

There isn't another creature living
Would do it, and prove, through every disaster,
So fond, so faithful, and so forgiving
To such a miserable, thankless master!
Yes, sir!—see him wag his tail and grin!
By George! it makes my old eyes water—
That is, there's something in this gin
That chokes a fellow. But no matter!

JOHN T. TROWBRIDGE

We'll have some music, if you're willing,
And Roger (hem! what a plague a cough is, sir!)
Shall march a little. Start, you villain!
Stand straight! 'Bout face! Salute your officer!
Put up that paw! Dress! Take your rifle!
(Some dogs have arms, you see!) Now hold your
Cap while the gentlemen give a trifle,
To aid a poor old patriot soldier!

March! Halt! Now show how the rebel shakes
When he stands up to hear his sentence.
Now tell us how many drams it takes
To honor a jolly new acquaintance.
Five yelps—that's five; he's mighty knowing!
The night's before us, fill the glasses!—
Quick, sir! I'm ill—my brain is going!
Some brandy—thank you—there!—it passes!

Why not reform? That's easily said,
But I've gone through such wretched treatment,
Sometimes forgetting the taste of bread,
And scarce remembering what meat meant,
That my poor stomach's past reform;
And there are times when, mad with thinking,
I'd sell out heaven for something warm
To prop a horrible inward sinking.

Is there a way to forget to think?
At your age, sir, home, fortune, friends,
A dear girl's love—but I took to drink—
The same old story; you know how it ends.
If you could have seen these classic features—
You needn't laugh, sir; they were not then
Such a burning libel on God's creatures;
I was one of your handsome men!

JOHN T. TROWBRIDGE

you had seen her, so fair and young,
Whose head was happy on this breast!
you could have heard the songs I sung
When the wine went round, you wouldn't have
guessed

that ever I, sir, should be straying
From door to door, with fiddle and dog
ragged and penniless, and playing
To you to-night for a glass of grog!

She's married since—a parson's wife;
'Twas better for her that we should part—
better the soberest, prosiest life
Than a blasted home and a broken heart.
Have you seen her? Once: I was weak and spent
On the dusty road, a carriage stopped;
but little she dreamed, as on she went,
Who kissed the coin that her fingers dropped!

You've set me talking, sir; I'm sorry;
It makes me wild to think of the change!
What do you care for a beggar's story?
Is it amusing? you find it strange?
I had a mother so proud of me!
'Twas well she died before— Do you know
the happy spirits in heaven can see
The ruin and wretchedness here below?

Another glass, and strong, to deaden
This pain; then Roger and I will start.
Wonder, has he such a lumpish, leaden,
Aching thing in place of a heart?
He is sad sometimes, and would weep if he could,
No doubt, remembering things that were—
a virtuous kennel, with plenty of food,
And himself a sober, respectable cur.

JOHN T. TROWBRIDGE

I'm better now; that glass was warning.

You rascal! limber your lazy feet!

We must be fiddling and performing

For supper and bed, or starve in the street.

Not a very gay life to lead, you think?

But soon we shall go where lodgings are free,
And the sleepers need neither victuals nor drink—

The sooner the better for Roger and me!

FRANCIS MILES FINCH

1827—1907

The Blue and the Gray

BY the flow of the inland river,
Whence the fleets of iron have fled,
Where the blades of the grave-grass quiver,
Asleep are the ranks of the dead:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the one, the Blue;
Under the other, the Gray.

These in the robings of glory,
Those in the gloom of defeat,
All with the battle-blood gory,
In the dusk of eternity meet:
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the laurel, the Blue;
Under the willow, the Gray.

FRANCIS MILES FINCH

From the silence of sorrowful hours
The desolate mourners go,
Lovingly laden with flowers,
Alike for the friend and the foe:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the roses, the Blue;
Under the lilies, the Gray.

So, with an equal splendor
The morning sun-rays fall,
With a touch impartially tender,
On the blossoms blooming for all:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Broidered with gold, the Blue;
Mellowed with gold, the Gray.

So, when the summer calleth,
On forest and field of grain,
With an equal murmur falleth
The cooling drip of the rain:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Wet with the rain, the Blue;
Wet with the rain, the Gray.

Sadly, but not with upbraiding,
The generous deed was done.
In the storms of the years that are fading
No braver battle was won:
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the blossoms, the Blue;
Under the garlands, the Gray.

FRANCIS MILES FINCH

No more shall the war-cry sever,
Or the winding rivers be red:
They banish our anger forever
When they laurel the graves of our dead!
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Love and tears for the Blue;
Tears and love for the Gray.

HENRY TIMROD

1829—1867

THE pathos and tragedy of his brief career find expression in words Timrod wrote concerning his poet not long before his death: "I would consign every line of it to eternal oblivion for—one-hundred dollars in hand. It was the cry of a starving man; and in it may be read the secret of his failure to reach the mark of a high attainment. Timrod was born and died in South Carolina. He engaged in journalism during the Civil War, and much of his poetry was inspired by that conflict. His ode, sung on the occasion of decorating the graves of the Confederate dead in Magnolia Cemetery, Charleston, is acclaimed "the noblest poem ever written by a Southern poet."

Quatorzain

MOST men know love but as a part of life;
They hide it in some corner of the breast
Even from themselves; and only when they rest
In the brief pauses of that daily strife,
Wherewith the world might else be not so rife,
They draw it forth (as one draws forth a toy
To soothe some ardent kiss-exacting boy)
And hold it up to sister, child, or wife.

HENRY TIMROD

Ah me! why may not love and life be one?
Why walk we thus alone, when by our side,
Love, like a visible god, might be our guide?
How would the marts grow noble! and the street,
Worn like a dungeon-floor by weary feet,
Seem then a golden court-way of the Sun!

Magnolia Cemetery

*ing at Charleston, S. C., over the graves of the Confed-
erate Soldiers.*

SLEEP sweetly in your humble graves,
Sleep, martyrs of a fallen cause!
Though yet no marble column craves
The pilgrim here to pause.

In seeds of laurel in the earth
The blossom of your fame is blown,
And somewhere, waiting for its birth,
The shaft is in the stone!

Meanwhile, behalf the tardy years
Which keep in trust your storied tombs,
Behold! your sisters bring their tears,
And these memorial blooms.

Small tributes! but your shades will smile
More proudly on these wreaths to-day,
Than when some cannon-moulded pile
Shall overlook this bay.

Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!
There is no holier spot of ground
Than where defeated valor lies,
By mourning beauty crowned!

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

1830—1886

HAYNE, a South Carolinian, was a colonel in the Confederate army, and wrote several popular Confederate songs. The war undermining his health and destroying home, he dwelt with his family in a cottage in the pbarrens near Augusta, Georgia. Hayne was long our representative Southern poet. As read today, his verses criticized because of their excessive sentimentality.

In Harbor

I THINK it is over, over
I think it is over at last;
Voices of foeman and lover,
The sweet and the bitter, have passed;
Life, like a tempest of ocean,
Hath outblown its ultimate blast:
There's but a faint sobbing seaward
While the calm of the tide deepens leeward,
And behold! like the welcoming quiver
Of heart-pulses throbbed through the river,
Those lights in the harbor at last,
The heavenly harbor at last!

I feel it is over! over!
For the winds and the waters surcease;
Ah, few were the days of the rover
That smiled in the beauty of peace!
And distant and dim was the omen
That hinted redress or release:—

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

From the ravage of life, and its riot,
What marvel I yearn for the quiet
Which bides in the harbor at last,
For the lights, with their welcoming quiver,
That throb through the sanctified river,
Which girdle the harbor at last,
This heavenly harbor at last?

EMILY DICKINSON

1830—1886

REGARDED by many as the foremost American woman poet, Emily Dickinson lived a secluded life in Amherst, Massachusetts, allowing her individuality the freest development, and publishing almost nothing. She corresponded for many years with Thomas Wentworth Higginson; and, at her death, he helped to arrange and publish her poems left in manuscript form. In thought, her introspective lyrics are frequently profound. In form, they are a law unto themselves. Many of them are touched with a strange magic. She seems to be intimate with eternity and the stars.

Parting

MY life closed twice before its close:
It yet remains to see
If Immortality unveil
A third event to me,

So huge, so hopeless to conceive,
As these that twice befell:
Parting is all we know of heaven,
And all we need of hell.

Called Back

JUST lost when I was saved!
 Just felt the world go by!
 Just girt me for the onset with eternity,
 When breath blew back
 And on the other side
 I heard recede the disappointed tide!
 Therefore, as one returned, I feel,
 Odd secrets of the line to tell!
 Some sailor, skirting foreign shores,
 Some pale reporter from the awful doors
 Before the seal!
 Next time, to stay!
 Next time, the things to see
 By ear unheard,
 Unscrutinized by eye.
 Next time, to tarry,
 While the ages steal:
 Slow tramp the centuries,
 And the cycles wheel.

No Time to Hate

I HAD no time to hate, because
 The grave would hinder me,
 And life was not so ample I
 Could finish enmity.
 Nor had I time to love; but since
 Some industry must be,
 The little toil of love, I thought,
 Was large enough for me.

EMILY DICKINSON

Presentiment

PRESENTIMENT is that long
shadow on the lawn
Indicative that suns go down;
The notice to the startled grass
That darkness is about to pass.

Colloquy

I DIED for beauty, but was scarce
Adjusted in the tomb,
When one who died for truth was lain
In an adjoining room.

He questioned softly why I failed?

"For beauty," I replied.

"And I for truth—the two are one;

We brethren are," he said.

And so, as kinsmen met a night,

We talked between the rooms,

Until the moss had reached our lips,

And covered up our names.

Chartless

I NEVER saw a moor,
I never saw the sea;
Yet know I how the heather looks,
And what a wave must be.

I never spoke with God,

Nor visited in heaven;

Yet certain am I of the spot

As if the chart were given.

EMILY DICKINSON

Suspense

ELYSIUM is as far as to
The very nearest room,
If in that room a friend await
Felicity or doom.

What fortitude the soul contains,
That it can so endure
The accent of a coming foot,
The opening of a door!

Vanished

SHE died—this is the way she died;
And when her breath was done,
Took up her simple wardrobe
And started for the sun.

Her little figure at the gate
The angels must have spied,
Since I could never find her
Upon the mortal side.

Post Mortum

THE bustle in a house
The morning after death
Is solemnest of industries
Enacted upon earth—

The sweeping up the heart,
And putting love away
We shall not want to use again
Until eternity.

EMILY DICKINSON

Exclusion

THE soul selects her own society,
Then shuts the door;
On her divine majority
Obtrude no more.

Unmoved, she notes the chariot's pausing
At her low gate;
Unmoved, an emperor is kneeling
Upon her mat.

I've known her from an ample nation
Choose one;
Then close the valves of her attention
Like stone.

Intoxication

I TASTE a liquor never brewed,
From tankards scooped in pearl;
Not all the vats upon the Rhine
Yield such an alcohol!

Inebriate of air am I,
And debauchee of dew,
Reeling, through endless summer days,
From inns of molten blue.

When landlords turn the drunken bee
Out of the foxglove's door,
When butterflies renounce their drams,
I shall but drink the more!

EMILY DICKINSON

Till seraphs swing their snowy hats,
And saints to windows run,
To see the little tippler
Leaning against the sun!

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

1831—1885

ALTHOUGH she did not begin to write until late in life when she was left a widow and desolate, Helen Hunt Jackson became nationally known as a writer of fine verse and as the author of *Ramona*, a novel in defense of Indian rights. Her friend and poet-contemporary, Emily Dickinson, pronounced "Mrs. Hunt's poems stronger than anything written by women since Mrs. Browning, with the exception of George Eliot." Stedman says that while Mrs. Jackson is grave and earnest and has won praise, yet she "lacks the variety of mood which betokens an inborn and always dominant poetic faculty."

Poppies in the Wheat

ALONG Ancona's hills the shimmering heat,
A tropic tide of air, with ebb and flow
Bathes all the fields of wheat until they glow
Like flashing seas of green, which toss and beat
Around the vines. The poppies lithe and fleet
Seem running, fiery torchmen, to and fro
To mark the shore. The farmer does not know
That they are there. He walks with heavy feet,
Counting the bread and wine by autumn's gain,
But I—I smile to think that days remain
Perhaps to me in which, though bread be sweet
No more, and red wine warm my blood in vain,
I shall be glad remembering how the fleet,
Lithe poppies ran like torchmen with the wheat.

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

Habeas Corpus

MY body, eh? Friend Death, how now?
Why all this tedious pomp of writ?
Thou hast reclaimed it sure and slow
For half a century, bit by bit.

In faith thou knowest more to-day
Than I do, where it can be found!
This shriveled lump of suffering clay,
To which I now am chained and bound,

Has not of kith or kin a trace
To the good body once I bore;
Look at this shrunken, ghastly face:
Didst ever see that face before?

Ah, well, friend Death, good friend thou art;
Thy only fault thy lagging gait,
Mistaken pity in thy heart
For timorous ones that bid thee wait.

Do quickly all thou hast to do,
Nor I nor mine will hindrance make;
I shall be free when thou art through;
I grudge thee naught that thou must take!

Stay! I have lied: I grudge thee one,
Yes, two I grudge thee at this last—
Two members which have faithful done
My will and bidding in the past.

I grudge thee this right hand of mine;
I grudge thee this quick-beating heart;

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

They never gave me coward sign,
Nor played me once a traitor's part.

I see now why in olden days
Men in barbaric love or hate
Nailed enemies' hands at wild crossways,
Shrined leaders' hearts in costly state:

The symbol, sign, and instrument
Of each soul's purpose, passion, strife,
Of fires in which are poured and spent
Their all of love, their all of life.

O feeble, mighty human hand!
O fragile, dauntless human heart!
The universe holds nothing planned
With such sublime, transcendent art!

Yes, Death, I own I grudge thee mine
Poor little hand, so feeble now;
Its wrinkled palm, its altered line,
Its veins so pallid and so slow—

[Unfinished here.]

Ah, well, friend Death, good friend thou art:
I shall be free when thou art through.
Take all there is—take hand and heart:
There must be somewhere work to do.

[Her last poem: 7 August, 1885.]

DAVID A. WASSON

1832—1887

All's Well

All's Well is a classic, and stands high in American poetry, for its beauty, its far-reaching spiritual insight, its depth of faith, its joy of hope. I discovered it in an old forgotten volume.

SWEET-VOICED Hope, thy fine discourse
Foretold not half life's good to me:
Thy painter, Fancy, hath not force
To show how sweet it is to be!
Thy witching dream
And pictured scheme
To match the fact still want the power:
Thy promise brave
From birth to grave
Life's boon may beggar in an hour.

Ask and receive—'tis sweetly said:
Yet what to plead for, know I not
For wish is worsted, Hope o'ersped,
And aye to thanks returns my thought.
If I would pray,
I've naught to say
But this, that God may be God still;
For him to live
Is still to give,
And sweeter than my wish his will.

DAVID A. WASSON

O wealth of life beyond all bound!
Eternity each moment given!
What plummet may the Present sound?
Who promises a future heaven?
Or glad, or grieved,
Oppressed, relieved,
In blackest night, or brightest day,
Still pours the flood
Of golden good,
And more than heartfull fills me aye.

My wealth is common; I possess
No petty province, but the whole:
What's mine alone is mine far less
Than treasures shared by every soul.
Talk not of store,
Millions or more—
Of values which the purse may hold—
But this divine!
I own the mine
Whose grains outweigh a planet's gold.

I have a stake in every star,
In every beam that fills the day;
All hearts of men my coffers are,
My ores arterial tides convey;
The fields, the skies,
And sweet replies
Of thought to thought are my gold-dust—
The oaks, the brooks,
And speaking looks
Of lovers' faith and friendship's trust.

DAVID A. WASSON

Life's youngest tides joy-brimming flow
For him who lives above all years,
Who all-immortal makes the Now,
And is not ta'en in Time's arrears:
His life's a hymn
The seraphim
Might hark to hear or help to sing,
And to his soul
The boundless whole
Its bounty all doth daily bring.

"All mine is thine," the sky-soul saith;
"The wealth I am, must thou become:
Richer and richer, breath by breath—
Immortal gain, immortal room!"
Life's gift outruns my fancies far,
And drowns the dream
In larger stream,
As morning drinks the morning-star.

JOHN JAMES INGALLS

1833—1900

Opportunity

MASTER of human destinies am I.
Fame, love, and fortune on my footsteps
wait,
Cities and fields I walk; I penetrate
Deserts and seas remote, and, passing by
Hovel, and mart, and palace, soon or late
I knock unbidden, once at every gate!
If sleeping, wake—if feasting, rise before
I turn away. It is the hour of fate,
And they who follow me reach every state
Mortals desire, and conquer every foe
Save death; but those who doubt or hesitate,
Condemned to failure, penury and woe,
Seek me in vain and uselessly implore—
I answer not, and I return no more.

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

1833—1899

Life Is a Narrow Vale

LIFE is a narrow vale between the cold
And barren peaks of two eternities.
We strive in vain to look beyond the heights,
We cry aloud; the only answer
Is the echo of our wailing cry.
From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead
There comes no word; but in the night of death
Hope sees a star, and listening love can hear
The rustle of a wing.
These myths were born of hopes, and fears and tears,
And smiles; and they were touched and colored
By all there is of joy and grief between
The rosy dawn of birth and death's sad night;
They clothed even the stars with passion,
And gave to gods the faults and frailties
Of the sons of men. In them the winds
And waves were music, and all the lakes and streams,
Springs, mountains, woods, and perfumed dells,
Were haunted by a thousand fairy forms.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

1833—1908

STEDMAN began life as a journalist in the Civil War. Afterward, desiring means to pursue a literary career, he became—for a quarter of a century—a Wall Street broker. He published two masterly volumes of criticism—*The Victorian Poets* and *The Poets of America*. He also published several books of verse, the best of which appear in his *Collected Poems* (1900). The poem, *Pan in Wall Street*, is a universal favorite. He edited a *Victorian Anthology* (1895) and *An American Anthology* (1900). The American volume has been criticized for too great catholicity. Both works, however, display a wide knowledge and a deep love of poetry; and they are highly valuable as sweep-ups of the periods covered.

Stedman was the first to greet my poems with generous and glowing welcome. So, years afterward, my first volume, *The Man with the Hoe, and Other Poems*, was dedicated in these words: "To Edmund Clarence Stedman—the first to praise and caution me."

Pan in Wall Street

A. D. 1867

JUST where the Treasury's marble front
Looks over Wall Street's mingled nations;
Where Jews and Gentiles most are wont
To throng for trade and last quotations;
Where, hour by hour, the rates of gold
Outrival, in the ears of people,
The quarter-chimes, serenely tolled
From Trinity's undaunted steeple—

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

Even there I heard a strange, wild strain
Sound high above the modern clamor,
Above the cries of greed and gain,
The curbstone war, the auction's hammer;
And swift, on Music's misty ways,
It led, from all this strife for millions,
To ancient, sweet-do-nothing days
Among the kirtle-robed Sicilians.

And as it stilled the multitude,
And yet more joyous rose, and shriller,
I saw the minstrel, where he stood
At ease against a Doric pillar:
One hand a droning organ played,
The other held a Pan's-pipe (fashioned
Like those of old) to lips that made
The reeds give out that strain impassioned.

'Twas Pan himself had wandered here
A-strolling through this sordid city,
And piping to the civic ear
The prelude of some pastoral ditty!
The demigod had crossed the seas—
From haunts of shepherd, nymph, and satyr,
And Syracusan times—to these
Far shores and twenty centuries later.

A ragged cap was on his head;
But—hidden thus—there was no doubting
That, all with crispy locks o'erspread,
His gnarlèd horns were somewhere sprouting;
His club-feet, cased in rusty shoes,
Were crossed, as on some frieze you see them,
And trousers, patched of divers hues,
Concealed his crooked shanks beneath them.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

He filled the quivering reeds with sound,
And o'er his mouth their changes shifted,
And with his goat's-eyes looked around
Where'er the passing current drifted;
And soon, as on Trinacrian hills
The nymphs and herdsmen ran to hear him,
Even now the tradesmen from their tills,
With clerks and porters, crowded near him.

The bulls and bears together drew
From Jauncey Court and New Street Alley,
As erst, if pastorals be true,
Came beasts from every wooded valley;
The random passers stayed to list—
A boxer Ægon, rough and merry,
A Broadway Daphnis, on his tryst
With Nais at the Brooklyn Ferry.

A one-eyed Cyclops halted long
In tattered cloak of army pattern,
And Galatea joined the throng,—
A blowsy, apple-vending slattern;
While old Silenus staggered out
From some new-fangled lunch-house handy,
And bade the piper, with a shout,
To strike up Yankee Doodle Dandy!

A newsboy and a peanut-girl
Like little Fauns began to caper:
His hair was all in tangled curl,
Her tawny legs were bare and taper;
And still the gathering larger grew,
And gave its pence and crowded nigher,
While aye the shepherd-minstrel blew
His pipe, and struck the gamut higher.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

O heart of Nature, beating still
With throbs her vernal passion taught her—
Even here, as on the vine-clad hill,
Or by the Arethusan water!
New forms may fold the speech, new lands
Arise within these ocean-portals,
But Music waves eternal wands—
Enchantress of the souls of mortals!

So thought I,—but among us trod
A man in blue, with legal baton,
And scoffed the vagrant demigod,
And pushed him from the step I sat on.
Doubting, I mused upon the cry,
“Great Pan is dead!”—and all the people
Went on their ways:—and clear and high
The quarter sounded from the steeple.

Falstaff's Song

WHERE'S he that died o' Wednesday?
What place on earth has he?
A tailor's yard beneath, I wot,
Where worms approaching be;
For the wight that died o' Wednesday,
Just laid the light below,
Is dead as the varlet turned to clay
A score of years ago.

Where's he that died o' Sabba' day ?
Good Lord, I'd not be he!
The best of days is foul enough
From this world's fair to flee;

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

And the saint that died o' Sabba' day,
With his grave turf yet to grow,
Is dead as the sinner brought to pray
A hundred years ago.

Where's he that died o' yesterday?
What better chance hath he
To clink the can and toss the pot
When this night's junkets be?
For the lad that died o' yesterday
Is just as dead—ho! ho!—
As the whoreson knave men laid away
A thousand years ago.

RICHARD REALF

1834—1878

Indirection

FAIR are the flowers and the children, but their
subtle suggestion is fairer;
Rare is the roseburst of dawn, but the secret that clasps
it is rarer;
Sweet the exultance of song, but the strain that pre-
cedes it is sweeter;
And never was poem yet writ, but the meaning out-
mastered the meter.

Never a daisy that grows, but a mystery guideth the
growing;
Never a river that flows, but a majesty scepters the
flowing;

RICHARD REALF

Never a Shakespeare that soared, but a stronger than
he did enfold him,
Nor ever a prophet foretells, but a mightier seer hath
foretold him.

Back of the canvas that throbs, the painter is hinted
and hidden;
Into the statue that breathes, the soul of the sculptor
is bidden;
Under the joy that is felt, lie the infinite issues of
feeling;
Crowning the glory revealed is the glory that crowns
the revealing.

Great are the symbols of being, but that which is
symboled is greater;
Vast the create and beheld, but vaster the inward
creator;
Back of the sound broods the silence, back of the gift
stands the giving;
Back of the hand that received thrill the sensitive
nerves of receiving.

Space is as nothing to spirit, the deed is outdone by
the doing;
The heart of the wooer is warm, but warmer the heart
of the wooing;
And up from the pits where these shiver and up from
the heights where those shine
Twin voices and shadows swim starward, and the
essence of life is divine.

CELIA THAXTER

1835—1894

The Sandpiper

A CROSS the narrow beach we flit,
One little sandpiper and I;
And fast I gather, bit by bit,
The scattered driftwood bleached and dry.
The wild waves reach their hands for it,
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,
As up and down the beach we flit—
One little sandpiper and I.

Above our heads the sullen clouds
Scud black and swift across the sky:
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds
Stand out the white light-houses high.
Almost as far as eye can reach
I see the close-reefed vessels fly,
As fast we flit along the beach—
One little sandpiper and I.

I watch him as he skims along,
Uttering his sweet and mournful cry.
He starts not at my fitful song,
Or flash of fluttering drapery.
He has no thought of any wrong:
He scans me with a fearless eye:
Stanch friends are we, well tried and strong,
The little sandpiper and I.

Comrade, where wilt thou be to-night
When the loosed storm breaks furiously?
My driftwood fire will burn so bright!

CELIA THAXTER

To what warm shelter canst thou fly?
I do not fear for thee, though wroth
The tempest rushes through the sky:
For are we not God's children both,
Thou, little sandpiper, and I?

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON

1835—1908

The House of Death

NOT a hand has lifted the latchet
Since she went out of the door—
No footstep shall cross the threshold,
Since she can come in no more.

There is rust upon locks and hinges,
And mould and blight on the walls,
And silence faints in the chambers,
And darkness waits in the halls—

Waits as all things have waited
Since she went, that day of spring,
Borne in her pallid splendor
To dwell in the Court of the King.

The birds make insolent music
Where the sunshine riots outside,
And the winds are merry and wanton
With the summers pomp and pride.

But into this desolate mansion
Where love has closed the door,
Nor sunshine nor summer shall enter,
Since she can come in no more.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

1836—1907

A NATIVE of New Hampshire, Aldrich went to New York at seventeen and was encouraged by N. P. Willis to pursue a literary career. His *Ballad of Baby Bell*, printed in 1855, touched the popular heart. After some years in the metropolis, where he was intimately associated with Bayard Taylor, Richard Henry Stoddard, Fitz-James O'Brien, William Winter, Edmund Clarence Stedman and other brilliant young aspirants struggling for subsistence and reputation in an arid literary atmosphere, he removed to Boston and became editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*. Aldrich was a prolific but ever fastidious writer of both verse and prose. His several volumes of poetry were brought together in a *Household Edition* (1895). Aldrich held himself to the highest ideals of literary art and workmanship.

Identity

SOMEWHERE in desolate wind-swept
space—

In Twilight land, in No-Man's land—
Two hurrying shapes met face to face,
And bade each other stand.

"And who are you," cried one agape,
Shuddering in the gloaming light.

"I know not," said the second shape,
"I only died last night."

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

Apparitions

AT noon of night, and at the night's pale end,
Such things have chanced to me
As one, by day, would scarcely tell a friend
For fear of mockery.

Shadows, you say, mirages of the brain!
I know not, faith, not I.
Is it more strange the dead should walk again
Than that the quick should die?

Memory

MY mind lets go a thousand things,
Like dates of wars and deaths of kings,
And yet recalls the very hour—
'Twas noon by yonder village tower,
And on the last blue noon in May—
The wind came briskly up this way,
Crisping the brook beside the road;
Then, pausing here, set down its load
Of pine-scents, and shook listlessly
Two petals from that wild-rose tree.

When the Sultan Goes to Ispahan

WHEN the Sultan Shah-Zaman
Goes to the city Ispahan,
Even before he gets so far
As the place where the clustered palm-trees are,
At the last of the thirty palace-gates,

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

The flower of the harem, Rose-in-Bloom,
Orders a feast in his favorite room—
Glittering squares of colored ice,
Sweetened with syrop, tinctured with spice,
Creams, and cordials, and sugared dates,
Syrian apples, Othmanee quinces,
Limes, and citrons, and apricots,
And wines that are known to Eastern princes;
And Nubian slaves, with smoking pots
Of spicèd meats and costliest fish
And all that the curious palate could wish,
Pass in and out of the cedarn doors;
Scattered over mosaic floors
Are anemones, myrtles, and violets,
And a musical fountain throws its jets
Of a hundred colors into the air.
The dusk Sultana loosens her hair,
And stains with the henna-plant the tips
Of her pointed nails, and bites her lips
Till they bloom again; but, alas, *that* rose
Not for the Sultan buds and blows!
Not for the Sultan Shah-Zaman
When he goes to the city Ispahan.

Then at a wave of her sunny hand
The dancing-girls of Samarcand
Glide in like shapes from fairy-land,
Making a sudden mist in air
Of fleecy veils and floating hair
And white arms lifted. Orient blood
Runs in their veins, shines in their eyes.
And there, in this Eastern Paradise,
Filled with the breath of sandal-wood,
And Khoten musk, and aloes and myrrh,
Sits Rose-in-Bloom on a silk divan,

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

Sipping the wines of Astrakhan;
And her Arab lover sits with her.
*That's when the Sultan Shah-Zaman
Goes to the city Ispahan.*

Now, when I see an extra light,
Flaming, flickering on the night
From my neighbor's casement opposite,
I know as well as I know to pray,
I know as well as a tongue can say,
*That the innocent Sultan Shah-Zaman
Has gone to the city Ispahan.*

Fredericksburg

THE increasing moonlight drifts across my bed,
And on the churchyard by the road, I know,
It falls as white and noiselessly as snow. . . .
Was such a night two weary summers fled
The stars as now were waning overhead.
Listen! again the shrill-lit bugles blow
Where the swift currents of the river flow
Past Fredericksburg: far off the heavens are red
With sudden conflagration: on yon height,
Linstock in hand, the gunners hold their breath:
Signal rocket pierces the dense night,
Flings its spent stars upon the town beneath:
Hark!—the artillery massing on the right,
Hark!—the black squadrons wheeling down to death!

WILLIAM HENRY VENABLE

1836—1918

My Catbird

A CAPRICCIO

PRIME cantante!
Scherzo! Andante!
Piano, pianissimo!
Presto, prestissimo!
Hark! are there nine birds or ninety and nine?
And now a miraculous gurgling gushes
Like nectar from Hebe's Olympian bottle,
The laughter of tune from a rapturous throttle!
Such melody must be a hermit-thrush's!
But that other caroler, nearer,
Outrivalling rivalry with clearer
Sweetness incredibly fine!
Is it oriole, red-bird, or blue-bird,
Or some strange, un-Auduboned new bird?
All one, sir, both this bird and that bird;
The whole flight are all the same catbird!
The whole visible and invisible choir you see
On one lithe twig of yon green tree.
Flitting, feathery Blondel!
Listen to his rondel!
To his lay romantical,
To his sacred canticle.
Hear him lilting!
See him tilting
His saucy head and tail, and fluttering

WILLIAM HENRY VENABLE

While uttering
All the difficult operas under the sun
Fast for fun;
Or in tipsy revelry,
Or at love devilry,
Or, disdaining his divine gift and art,
Like an inimitable poet
Who captivates the world's heart,
And doesn't know it.
Hear him lilt!
See him tilt!

When suddenly he stops,
Peers about, flirts, hops,
As if looking where he might gather up
The wasted ecstasy just spilt
From the quivering cup
Of his bliss overrun.
Then, as in mockery of all
The tuneful spells that e'er did fall
From vocal pipe, or evermore shall rise,
He snarls, and mews, and flies.

JOHN BURROUGHS

1837—1921

Waiting

SERENE I fold my hands and wait,
Nor care for wind, nor tide, nor sea.
I rave no more 'gainst time or fate,
For lo! my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays,
For what avails this eager pace?
I stand amid the eternal ways,
And what is mine shall know my face.

Asleep, awake, by night or day,
The friends I seek are seeking me;
No wind can drive my bark astray,
Nor change the tide of destiny.

What matter if I stand alone?
I wait with joy the coming years;
My heart shall reap where it hath sown,
And garner up its fruit of tears.

The waters know their own and draw
The brook that springs in yonder height;
So flows the good with equal law
Unto the soul of pure delight.

The stars come nightly to the sky;
The tidal wave unto the sea;
Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high,
Can keep my own away from me.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS

1837—1920

It was while he was news editor of *The Ohio State Journal* in 1859 that Howells published a small volume of verse, and also contributed poems to *The Atlantic Monthly*, of which he became assistant editor in 1866 and editor in 1872. In American literature he was the leader of the realistic school, his novels portraying the average American life. Howells, in his later life, was called "the dean of American writers."

He had a most delightful personality, radiating sympathy and good cheer. He also had granite in his character, as was shown on many public occasions when he courageously advocated unpopular causes. From its foundation in 1909 until his death, he was the president of The American Academy of Arts and Letters.

The Bewildered Guest

I WAS not asked if I should like to come,
I have not seen my host here since I came,
Or had a word of welcome in his name.
Some say that we shall never see him, and some
That we shall see him elsewhere, and then know
Why we were bid. How long I am to stay
I have not the least notion. None they say,
Was ever told when he should come or go.
But every now and then there bursts upon
The song and mirth a lamentable noise,
A sound of shrieks and sobs, that strikes our joys
Dumb in our breasts; and then, some one is gone.
They say we meet him. None knows where or when.
We know that we shall not meet him here again.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS

Heredity

THAT swollen paunch you are doomed to be
Your gluttonous grandsire used to wear:
That tongue, at once so light and dull,
Wagged in your grandam's empty skull;
That leering of the sensual eye
Your father, when he came to die,
Left yours alone: and that cheap flirt,
Your mother, gave you from the dirt
The simper which she used upon
So many men ere he was won.

Your vanity and greed and lust
Are each your portion from the dust
Of those that died, and from the tomb
Made you what you must needs become.
I do not hold you aught to blame
For sin at second hand, and shame:
Evil could but from evil spring;
And yet, away, you charnel thing!

JOHN HAY

1838—1905

BESIDES being a poet of distinction, John Hay lives in history as an American statesman and diplomat. His *Collected Poems* appeared in 1890. With Hay poetry was distinctly an avocation.

Jim Bludso of the Prairie Belle

WALL, no! I can't tell whar he lives,
Becase he don't live, you see;
Leastways, he's got out of the habit
Of livin' like you and me.
Whar have you been for the last three year
That you haven't heard folks tell
How Jimmy Bludso passed in his checks
The night of the Prairie Belle?

He weren't no saint—they engineers
Is all pretty much alike—
One wife in Natchez-under-the-Hill
And another one here, in Pike;
A keerless man in his talk was Jim,
And an awkward hand in a row,
But he never flunked, and he never lied;
I reckon he never knowed how.

And this was all the religion he had—
To treat his engine well;
Never be passed on the river;

JOHN HAY

To mind the pilot's bell;
And if ever the Prairie Belle took fire,
A thousand times he swore
He'd hold her nozzle agin the bank
Till the last soul got ashore.

All boats has their day on the Mississip,
And her day come at last—
The Movastar was a better boat,
But the Belle she *wouldn't* be passed.
And so she come tearin' along that night—
The oldest craft on the line—
With a nigger squat on her safety-valve,
And her furnace crammed, rosin and pine.

The fire bust out as she clared the bar,
And burnt a hole in the night,
And quick as a flash she turned, and made
For that willer-bank on the right.
There was runnin' and cursin', but Jim yelled out,
Over all the infernal roar,
"I'll hold her nozzle agin the bank
Till the last galoot's ashore."

Through the hot, black breath of the burnin' boat
Jim Bludso's voice was heard,
And they all had trust in his cussedness,
And knowed he would keep his word.
And, sure's you're born, they all got off
Afore the smokestacks fell—
And Bludso's ghost went up alone
In the smoke of the Prairie Belle.

He weren't no saint; but at jedgment
I'd run my chance with Jim,

JOHN HAY

'Longside of some pious gentlemen
That wouldn't shook hands with him.
He seen his duty, a dead-sure thing—
And went for it thar and then;
And Christ ain't a going to be too hard
On a man that died for men.

MARY MAPES DODGE

1838—1905

The Minuet

GRANDMA told me all about it,
Told me so I couldn't doubt it,
How she danced, my grandma danced; long ago—
How she held her pretty head,
How her dainty skirt she spread,
How she slowly leaned and rose—long ago.

Grandma's hair was bright and sunny,
Dimpled cheeks, too, oh, how funny!
Really quite a pretty girl—long ago.
Bless her! why, she wears a cap,
Grandma does, and takes a nap
Every single day: and yet
Grandma danced the minuet—long ago.

"Modern ways are quite alarming,"
Grandma says, "but boys were charming"
(Girls and boys she means, of course) "long ago."
Brave but modest, grandly shy;
She would like to have us try
Just to feel like those who met
In the graceful minuet—long ago.

FRANCIS BRET HARTE

1839—1902

As a poet, Bret Harte is distinguished chiefly for his skill (even more marked in his prose tales) in emphasizing the California frontier life following the discovery of gold in the mid-nineteenth century. Having failed as a gold-miner, he turned editor-author in San Francisco. His most popular creation in verse, *Plain Language from Truthful James*, better known as *The Heathen Chinese* made Bret Harte famous in 1870.

Fate

THE sky is clouded, the rocks are bare,
The spray of the tempest is white in air,
The winds are out with the waves at play,
And I shall not tempt the sea to-day."

"The trail is narrow, the wood is dim,
The panther clings to the arching limb,
And the lion's whelps are abroad at play,
And I shall not join in the chase to-day."

But the ship sailed safely over the sea,
And the hunters came home from the chase in glee
And the town that was builded upon a rock
Was swallowed up in the earthquake shock.

FRANCIS BRET HARTE

The Heathen Chinee

WHICH I wish to remark—
And my language is plain—
That for ways that are dark
And for tricks that are vain,
The heathen Chinee is peculiar.
Which the same I would rise to explain.

Ah Sin was his name,
And I shall not deny
In regard to the same
What that name might imply;
But his smile it was pensive and childlike,
As I frequent remarked to Bill Nye.

It was August the third;
And quite soft was the skies;
Which it might be inferred
That Ah Sin was likewise;
Yet he played it that day upon William
And me in a way I despise.

Which we had a small game,
And Ah Sin took a hand:
It was Euchre. The same
He did not understand;
But he smiled as he sat by the table,
With the smile that was childlike and bland.

Yet the cards they were stocked
In a way that I grieve,
And my feelings were shocked
At the state of Nye's sleeve,
Which was stuffed full of aces and bowers,
And the same with intent to deceive.

FRANCIS BRET HARTE

But the hands that were played
By that heathen Chinee,
And the points that he made,
Were quite frightful to see—
Till at last he put down a right bower,
Which the same Nye had dealt unto me.

Then I looked up at Nye,
And he gazed upon me;
And he rose with a sigh,
And said, "Can this be?
We are ruined by Chinee cheap labor,"—
And he went for that heathen Chinee.

In the scene that ensued
I did not take a hand,
But the floor it was strewed
Like the leaves on the strand
With the cards that Ah Sin had been hiding,
In the game "he did not understand."

In his sleeves, which were long,
He had twenty-four packs—
Which was coming it strong,
Yet I state but the facts;
And we found on his nails, which were taper—
Which is frequent in tapers—that's wax.

Which is why I remark—
And my language is plain—
What for ways that are dark,
And for tricks that are vain,
The heathen Chinee is peculiar.
Which the same I am free to maintain.

FRANCIS BRET HARTE

The Society Upon the Stanislaus

RESIDE at Table Mountain, and my name is
Truthful James;

I am not up to small deceit, or any sinful games;
and I'll tell in simple language what I know about the
row

that broke up our Society upon the Stanislaw.

At first I would remark, that it is not a proper plan
for any scientific gent to whale his fellow-man,
and, if a member don't agree with his peculiar whim,
to lay for that same member for to "put a head" on
him.

Now nothing could be finer or more beautiful to see
than the first six months' proceedings of that same
Society,

When Brown of Calaveras brought a lot of fossil bones
that he found within a tunnel near the tenement of
Jones.

When Brown he read a paper, and he reconstructed
there,

From those same bones, an animal that was extremely
rare;

And Jones then asked the Chair for a suspension of the
rules,

And he could prove that those same bones was one
of his lost mules.

When Brown he smiled a bitter smile, and said he was
at fault,—

Seemed he had been trespassing on Jones's family
vault:

FRANCIS BRET HARTE

He was a most sarcastic man, this quiet Mr. Brown
And on several occasions he had cleaned out the town

Now I hold it is not decent for a scientific gent
To say another is an ass,—at least, to all intent;
Nor should the individual who happens to be meant
Reply by heaving rocks at him, to any great extent.

Then Abner Dean of Angel's raised a point of order—
when
A chunk of old red sandstone took him in the abdomen
And he smiled a kind of sickly smile, and curled up
on the floor,
And the subsequent proceedings interested him no more

For, in less time than I write it, every member drew
engage
In a warfare with the remnants of a palæozoic age;
And the way they heaved those fossils in their anger
was a sin,
Till the skull of an old mammoth caved the head
Thompson in.

And this is all I have to say of these improper games,
For I live at Table Mountain, and my name is Truthful
James;
And I've told in simple language what I know about
the row
That broke up our Society upon the Stanislaw.

JAMES RYDER RANDALL

1839—1908

My Maryland

THE despot's heel is on thy shore,
Maryland!

His torch is at thy temple door,
Maryland!

Avenge the patriotic gore
That flecked the streets of Baltimore,
And be the battle-queen of yore,
Maryland! my Maryland!

Hark to an exiled son's appeal,
Maryland!

My Mother State, to thee I kneel,
Maryland!

For life and death, for woe and weal,
Thy peerless chivalry reveal,
And gird thy beauteous limbs with steel,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Thou wilt not cower in the dust,
Maryland!

Thy beaming sword shall never rust,
Maryland!

Remember Carroll's sacred trust,
Remember Howard's warlike thrust,
And all thy slumberers with the just,
Maryland, my Maryland!

JAMES RYDER RANDALL

Come! for thy shield is bright and strong,
Maryland!

Come! for thy dalliance does thee wrong,
Maryland!

Come to thine own heroic throng
Stalking with Liberty along,
And chant thy dauntless slogan-song,
Maryland, my Maryland!

I see the blush upon thy cheek,
Maryland!

For thou wast ever bravely meek,
Maryland!

But lo! there surges forth a shriek,
From hill to hill, from creek to creek,
Potomac calls to Chesapeake,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Thou wilt not yield the Vandal toll,
Maryland!

Thou wilt not crook to his control,
Maryland!

Better the fire upon thee roll,
Better the shot, the blade, the bowl,
Than crucifixion of the soul,
Maryland, my Maryland!

I hear the distant thunder-hum,
Maryland!

The old Line's bugle, fife and drum,
Maryland!

She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb;
Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum!
She breathes! She burns! She'll come!
She'll come!

Maryland, my Maryland!

JOAQUIN MILLER

1841—1913

MILLER, whose pseudonym was due to his defense of Joaquin Murietta, a Mexican bandit, was born in Indiana, but migrated to the Pacific coast when a boy, became a California gold miner, accompanied Walker on his Nicaraguan filibustering expeditions in 1855 and subsequently lived among the Indians. Failing to find a publisher in this country for his *Songs of the Sierras*, he brought the book out in London and, like Byron, awoke one morning and found himself famous. Later he returned to California and established a picturesque residence near Oakland, where he died in February, 1913. His oddity of dress and unconventional character stimulated interest in his poetry. His *Columbus* is regarded by many as one of the greatest poems ever written in America; and yet it ends in a bald didactic talk about "our grandest lesson." The poem would be stronger if the last stanza were omitted.

I knew Joaquin for nearly thirty years. In spite of certain imperfections sometimes charged against him, I found him to be a just and generous neighbor, a man with many nobilities of character, and a thinker with many high dreams for the social welfare of the race.

Columbus

BEHIND him lay the gray Azores,
Behind the Gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores,
Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said: "Now must we pray,
For lo! the very stars are gone.
Brave Adm'r'l, speak! What shall I say?"
"Why, say: 'Sail on! sail on! and on!'"

JOAQUIN MILLER

"My men grow mutinous day by day;
My men grow ghastly, wan and weak."
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.
"What shall I say, brave Adm'r'l, say,
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?"
"Why, you shall say at break of day:
'Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!'"

They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow,
Until at last the blanched mate said:
"Why, now not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.
These very winds forget their way,
For God from these dread seas is gone.
Now speak, brave Adm'r'l, speak and say——"
He said: "Sail on! sail on! and on!"

They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:
"This mad sea shows his teeth tonight.
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,
He lifts his teeth as if to bite!
Brave Adm'r'l, say but one good word:
What shall we do when hope is gone?"
The words leapt like a leaping sword:
"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"

Then pale and worn, he paced his deck,
And peered through darkness. Ah, that night
Of all dark nights! And then a speck—
A light! A light! A light! A light!
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!
It grew to be Time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world; he gave that world
Its grandest lesson: "On! sail on!"

JOAQUIN MILLER

In Men Whom Men Condemn

I N men whom men condemn as ill
I find so much of goodness still,
In men whom men pronounce divine
I find so much of sin and blot,
I hesitate to draw the line
Between the two, where God has not.

Twilight at the Hights

THE brave young city by the Balboa seas
Lies compassed about by the hosts of night—
Lies humming, low, like a hive of bees;
And the day lies dead. And its spirit's flight
Is far to the west; while the golden bars
That bound it are broken to a dust of stars.

Come under my oaks, oh, drowsy dusk!
The wolf and the dog; dear incense hour
When Mother Earth hath a smell of musk,
And things of the spirit assert their power—
When candles are set to burn in the west—
Set head and foot to the day at rest.

Crossing the Plains

WHAT great yoked brutes with briskets low,
With wrinkled necks like buffalo,
With round, brown, liquid, pleading eyes,
That turned so low and sad to you,
That shone like love's eyes soft with tears,
That seemed to plead, and make replies,

JOAQUIN MILLER

The while they bowed their necks and drew
The creaking load; and looked at you.
Their sable briskets swept the ground,
Their cloven feet kept solemn sound.

Two sullen bullocks led the line,
Their great eyes shining bright like wine;
Two sullen captive kings were they,
That had in time held herds at bay,
And even now they crushed the sod
With stolid sense of majesty,
And stately stepped and stately trod,
As if 'twere something still to be
Kings even in captivity.

Dead in the Sierras

HIS footprints have failed us,
Where berries are red,
And madroños are rankest,—
The hunter is dead!

The grizzly may pass
By his half-open door;
May pass and repass
On his path, as of yore;

The panther may crouch
In the leaves on his limb;
May scream and may scream,—
It is nothing to him.

Prone, bearded, and breasted
Like columns of stone;

JOAQUIN MILLER

And tall as a pine—
As a pine overthrown!

His camp-fires gone,
What else can be done
Than let him sleep on
Till the light of the sun?

Ay, tombless! what of it?
Marble is dust,
Cold and repellent;
And iron is rust.

Vaquero

HIS broad-brimmed hat pushed back with careless
air,
The proud vaquero sits his steed as free
As winds that toss his black abundant hair.
No rover ever swept a lawless sea
With such a haught and heedless air as he
Who scorns the path, and bounds with swift disdain
Away, a peon born, yet born to be
A splendid king; behold him ride and reign.
How brave he takes his herds in branding days,
On timbered hills that belt about the plain;
He climbs, he wheels, he shouts through winding ways
Of hiding ferns and hanging fir; the rein
Is loose, the rattling spur drives swift; the mane
Blows free; the bullocks rush in storms before;
They turn with lifted heads, they rush again,
Then sudden plunge from out the wood, and pour
A cloud upon the plain with one terrific roar.

JOAQUIN MILLER

Now sweeps the tawny man on stormy steed,
His gaudy trappings tossed about and blown
About the limbs as lithe as any reed;
The swift long lasso twirled above is thrown
From flying hand; the fall, the fearful groan
Of bullock toiled and tumbled in the dust—
The black herds onward sweep, and all disown
The fallen, struggling monarch that has thrust
His tongue in rage and rolled his red eyes in disgust

From "Walker in Nicaragua"

WHAT snakes! long, lithe and beautiful
As green and graceful boughed bamboo.
How they did twine them through and through
Green boughs that hung red-fruited full!
One, monster-sized, above me hung,
Close-eyed me with his bright pink eyes,
Then raised his folds, and swayed and swung,
And licked like lightning his red tongue,
Then oped his wide mouth with surprise.
He writhed and curved and raised and lowered
His folds, like liftings of the tide;
Then sank so low I touched his side,
As I rode by, with my boy's sword.
The trees shook hands high overhead,
And bowed and intertwined across
The narrow way, while leaves and moss
And luscious fruit, gold-hued and red,
Through all the canopy of green,
Let not one sun-shaft shoot between.

Birds hung and swung, red-robed and red,
Or drooped in curved lines dreamily,

JOAQUIN MILLER

Rainbows reversed, from tree to tree,
Or sang low-hanging overhead—
Sang low, as if they sang and slept,
Sang faint like some far waterfall,
And took no note of us at all,
Though nuts that in the way were spread
Did crash and crackle where we stept.

From "Myrrh"

*L*IFE knows no dead so beautiful
As is the white cold coffined past;
This I may love nor be betrayed:
The dead are faithful to the last.
I am not spouseless—I have wed
A memory—a life that's dead.

Farewell! for here the ways at last
Divide—diverge, like deltaed Nile,
Which after desert dangers passed
Of many and many a thousand mile,
As constant as a column stone,
Seeks out the sea, divorced—alone.

And you and I have buried Love,
A red seal on the coffin's lid;
The clerk below, the court above,
Pronounce it dead: the corpse is hid
And I who never crossed your will
Consent . . . that you may have it still. . . .

What reck's it now, whose was the blame?
But call it mine; for better used
Am I to wrong and cold disdain,

JOAQUIN MILLER

Can better bear to be accused
Of all that wears the shape of shame,
Than have you bear the touch of blame.

From "Exodus for Oregon"

A TALE half told and hardly understood;
The talk of bearded men that chanced to meet,
That leaned on long quaint rifles in the wood,
That looked in fellow faces, spoke discreet
And low, as half in doubt and in defeat
Of hope; a tale it was of lands and gold
That lay below the sun. Wild-winged and fleet
It spread among the swift Missouri's bold
Unbridled men, and reached to where Ohio roll'd.

Then long chained lines of yoked and patient steers;
Then long white trains that pointed to the west,
Beyond the savage west; the hopes and fears
Of blunt, untutored men, who hardly guessed
Their course; the brave and silent women, dressed
In homely spun attire, the boys in bands,
The cheery babes that laughed at all, and blessed
The doubting hearts, with laughing lifted hands! . .
What exodus for far untraversed lands!

The Plains! The shouting drivers at the wheel;
The crash of leather whips; the crush and roll
Of wheels; the groan of yokes and grinding steel
And iron chain; and lo; at last the whole
Vast line, that reached as if to touch the goal,
Began to stretch and stream away and wind
Toward the west, as if with one control;

JOAQUIN MILLER

Then hope loomed fair, and home lay far behind;
Before, the boundless plain, and the fiercest of their
kind. . . .

Strange hungered birds, black-winged and still as death,
And crowned of red with hooked beaks, blew low
And close about, till we could touch their breath—
Strange unnamed birds, that seemed to come and go
In circles now, and now direct and slow,
Continual, yet never touch the earth;
Slim foxes slid and shuttled to and fro
At times across the dusty weary dearth
Of life, looked back, then sank like crickets in a hearth.

EDWARD ROWLAND SILL

1841—1887

GRADUATED from Yale in 1861, Sill was finally called to fill the chair of English literature in the University of California. Later he devoted himself wholly to literature. The best of his work was published posthumously in book form in 1888. He wrote with a certain terse austerity, not unlike Emerson's curt attack.

The Fool's Prayer

THE royal feast was done; the King
Sought some new sport to banish care,
And to his jester cried: "Sir Fool,
Kneel now, and make for us a prayer!"

The jester doffed his cap and bells,
And stood the mocking court before;
They could not see the bitter smile
Behind the painted grin he wore.

EDWARD ROWLAND SILL

He bowed his head, and bent his knee
Upon the monarch's silken stool;
His pleading voice arose: "O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!

"No pity, Lord, could change the heart
From red with wrong to white as wool:
The rod must heal the sin; but, Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!

" 'T is not by guilt the onward sweep
Of truth and right, O Lord, we stay;
'T is by our follies that so long
We hold the earth from heaven away.

"These clumsy feet, still in the mire,
Go crushing blossoms without end;
These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust
Among the heart-strings of a friend.

"The ill-timed truth we might have kept—
Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung!
The word we had not sense to say—
Who knows how grandly it had rung!

"Our faults no tenderness should ask,
The chastening stripes must cleanse them all;
But for our blunders—oh, in shame
Before the eyes of heaven we fall.

"Earth bears no balsam for mistakes;
Men crown the knave, and scourge the tool
That did his will; but Thou, O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!"

EDWARD ROWLAND SILL

The room was hushed; in silence rose
The King, and sought his gardens cool,
And walked apart, and murmured low,
"Be merciful to me, a fool!"

Opportunity

THIS I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream:—
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords
Clashed upon swords and shields. A prince's banner
Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.

A craven hung along the battle's edge,
And thought, "Had I a sword of keener steel—
That blue blade that the king's son bears—but this
Blunt thing!"—he snapped and flung it from his hand,
And lowering crept away and left the field.

Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bestead,
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword,
Silt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,
And ran and snatched it, and with battle-shout
Lifted afresh he hewed his enemy down,
And saved a great cause that heroic day.

SIDNEY LANIER

1842—1881

INHERITING a bent for musical composition, Lanier, in childhood, learned to play on the guitar, piano, flute, and violin without any instruction. This passion for music is revealed in his poetry of nature and lofty aspiration. Born in Georgia, Lanier remains the great representative poet of the South. He served as a Confederate soldier in the Civil War.

Evening Song

LOOK off, dear Love, across the sallow sand,
And mark yon meeting of the sun and sea,
How long they kiss in sight of all the land.
Ah! longer, longer, we!

Now in the sea's red vintage melts the sun,
As Egypt's pearl dissolved in rosy wine,
And Cleopatra night drinks all. 'Tis done,
Love, lay thy hand in mine.

Come forth, sweet stars, and comfort heaven's heart
Glimmer, ye waves, round else unlighted sands.
O night! Divorce our sun and sky apart,
Never our lips, our hands.

SIDNEY LANIER

The Stirrup-Cup

DEATH, thou'rt a cordial old and rare:
Look how compounded, with what care,
Time got his wrinkles reaping thee
Sweet herbs from all antiquity.

David to thy distillage went,
Keats, and Gotama excellent,
Omar Khayyám, and Chaucer bright,
And Shakespeare for a king-delight.

Then, Time, let not a drop be spilt:
Hand me the cup whene'er thou wilt;
'Tis thy rich stirrup-cup to me;
I'll drink it down right smilingly.

From "The Marshes of Glynn"

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of
God:

Will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh
and the skies:

As many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
Will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:
For, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
the range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.

And the sea lends large, as the marsh: lo, out of his
plenty the sea
Runs fast: full soon the time of the flood-tide must be:

SIDNEY LANIER

Look how the grace of the sea doth go
About and about through the intricate channels that flow
 Here and there,
 Everywhere,

Till his waters have flooded the uttermost creeks and
 the low-lying lanes,
And the marsh is meshed with a million veins,
That like as with rosy and silvery essences flow
 In the rose-and-silver evening glow.
 Farewell, my lord Sun!

The creeks overflow: a thousand rivulets run
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh
 grass stir;
Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward whir
Passeth, and all is still; and the currents cease to run
And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!
The tide in his ecstasy.
The tide is at his highest height:
 And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters
 sleep
Roll in on the souls of men,
But who will reveal to our waking ken
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep
 Under the waters of sleep?
And I would I could know what swimmeth below where
 the tide comes in
On the length and breadth of the marvellous marsh
 of Glynn.

AMBROSE BIERCE

1842—?

NATIVE of Ohio, this poet-journalist spent much of his life in California. His collected works in verse and prose appeared (13 volumes) in 1912, and two years later the author mysteriously disappeared in Mexico.

Bierce was a many-sided man—critic, humorist, storyteller and poet. He was a master of the tale of terror. He startled with brilliant satire in verse and in prose fable. Sometimes his epigrams leap out like live scorpions. For many years he was the literary autocrat of the Far West. He was a storm of crashing and crushing judgments. Naturally, such a man would have bitter antipathies and few friendships. I knew him intimately: he was a strange compound of powers. He had in him the intellectual barb of Swift, the terseness of Æsop, the weirdness of Poe, and a gleam of the Galilean.

Montefiore

AW—'twas in a dream, the other night—
A man whose hair with age was thin and white;
One hundred years had bettered by his birth,
Still his step was firm, his eye was bright.

Before him and about him pressed a crowd.
His head in reverence was bared and bowed,
And Jews and Gentiles in a hundred tongues
Praised his deeds and spake his fame aloud.

AMBROSE BIERCE

I joined the throng and, pushing forward, cried,
"Montefiore!" with the rest, and vied

In efforts to caress the hand that ne'er
To want and worth had charity denied.

So closely round him swarmed our shouting clan
He scarce could breathe, and, taking from a pan

A gleaming coin, he tossed it o'er our heads,
And in a moment was a lonely man!

The Death of Grant

FATHER! whose hard and cruel law
Is part of thy compassion's plan,
Thy works presumptuously we scan
For what the prophets say they saw.

Unbidden still, the awful slope
Walling us in, we climb to gain
Assurance of the shining plain
That faith has certified to hope.

In vain: beyond the circling hill
The shadow and the cloud abide;
Subdue the doubt, our spirits guide
To trust the Record and be still;

To trust it loyally as he
Who, heedful of his high design,
Ne'er raised a seeking eye to thine,
But wrought thy will unconsciously,

AMBROSE BIERCE

Disputing not of chance or fate,
Nor questioning of cause or creed:
For anything but duty's deed
Too simply wise, too humbly great.

The cannon syllabled his name;
His shadow shifted o'er the land,
Portentous, as at his command
Successive cities sprang to flame!

He fringed the continent with fire,
The rivers ran in lines of light!
Thy will be done on earth—if right
Or wrong he cared not to inquire.

His was the heavy hand, and his
The service of the despot blade;
His the soft answer that allayed
War's giant animosities.

Let us have peace: our clouded eyes
Fill, Father, with another light,
That we may see with clearer sight
Thy servant's soul in Paradise.

Religion

HASSAN Bedriddin, clad in rags, ill-shod,
Sought the great temple of the living God.
The worshippers arose and drove him forth,
And one in power beat him with a rod.

AMBROSE BIERCE

"Allah," he cried, "thou seest what I got;
Thy servants bar me from the sacred spot."

"Be comforted," the Holy One replied;
"It is the only place where I am not."

Rebuke

WHEN Admonition's hand essays
Our greed to curse,
Its lifted finger oft displays
Our missing purse.

To a Critic of Tennyson

AFFRONTING fool, subdue your transient light
When Wisdom's dull, dares Folly to be bright?
If Genius stumble in the path to fame,
'T is decency in dunces to go lame.

The Politician

LET Glory's sons manipulate
The tiller of the Ship of State.
Be mine the humble, useful toil
To work the tiller of the soil."

Another Way

I LAY in silence dead. A woman came
And laid a rose upon my breast and said,
"May God be merciful." She spoke my name,
And added, "It is strange to think him dead."

AMBROSE BIERCE

loved me well enough, but 'twas his way
to speak it lightly." Then, beneath her breath:
sides"—I knew what further she would say,
but then a footfall broke my dream of death.

day the words are mine. I lay the rose
upon her breast, and speak her name, and deem
strange indeed that she is dead. God knows
I had more pleasure in the other dream.

T. A. H.

ES, he was that, or that, as you prefer—

Did so and so, though, faith, it wasn't all;

ed like a fool, or a philosopher,

had whatever's needful to a fall.

rough inflections on a planet merge

the true bend of the gigantic sphere,

mar the perfect circle of its verge;

n the survey of his worth the small

eritics of spirit disappear,

in the grander curves of character.

lately was hit hard; none knew but I

strength and terror of that ghastly stroke—

even herself. He uttered not a cry,

set his teeth and made a revelry;

ak like a devil—staining sometimes red

goblet's edge; diced with his conscience; spread,

Sisyphus, a feast for Death, and spoke

welcome in a tongue so long forgot

even his ancient guest remembered not

t race had cursed him in it. Thus my friend,

conjugating with each failing sense

AMBROSE BIERCE

The verb "to die" in every mood and tense,
Pursued his awful humor to the end.
When, like a stormy dawn, the crimson broke
From his white lips, he smiled and mutely bled,
And, having meanly lived, is grandly dead.

An Invocation

Read at the Celebration of Independence Day in San Francisco, in 1888

GODDESS of Liberty! O thou
Whose tearless eyes behold the chain,
And look unmoved upon the slain,
Eternal peace upon thy brow—

Before thy shrine the races press,
Thy perfect favor to implore—
The proudest tyrant asks no more,
The ironed anarchist no less.

Thine altar-coals that touch the lips
Of prophets kindle, too, the brand
By Discord flung with wanton hand
Among the houses and the ships.

Upon thy tranquil front the star
Burns bleak and passionless and white,
Its cold inclemency of light
More dreadful than the shadows are.

Thy name we do not here invoke
Our civic rites to sanctify:
Enthroned in thy remoter sky,
Thou heedest not our broken yoke.

AMBROSE BIERCE

Thou carest not for such as we:
Our millions die to serve the still
And secret purpose of thy will.
They perish—what is that to thee?

The light that fills the patriot's tomb
Is not of thee. The shining crown
Compassionately offered down
To those who falter in the gloom,

And fall, and call upon thy name,
And die desiring—'tis the sign
Of a diviner lover than thine,
Rewarding with a richer fame.

To him alone let freemen cry
Who hears alike the victor's shout,
The song of faith, the moan of doubt,
And bends him from his nearer sky.

God of my country and my race!
So greater than the gods of old—
So fairer than the prophets told
Who dimly saw and feared thy face—

Who didst but half reveal thy will
And gracious ends to their desire,
Behind the dawn's advancing fire
Thy tender day-beam veiling still—

To whom the unceasing suns belong,
And cause is one with consequence—
To whose divine, inclusive sense
The moan is blended with the song—

AMBROSE BIERCE

Whose laws, imperfect and unjust,
Thy just and perfect purpose serve:
The needle, howsoe'er it swerve,
Still warranting the sailor's trust—

God, lift thy hand and make us free
To crown the work thou hast designed.
O strike away the chains that bind
Our souls to one idolatry!

The liberty thy love hath given
We thank thee for. We thank thee for
Our great dead fathers' holy war
Wherein our manacles were riven.

We thank thee for the stronger stroke
Ourselves delivered and incurred
When—thine incitement half unheard—
The chains we riveted we broke.

We thank thee that beyond the sea
The people, growing ever wise,
Turn to the west their serious eyes
And dumbly strive to be as we.

As when the sun's returning flame
Upon the Nileside statue shone,
And struck from the enchanted stone
The music of a mighty fame,

Let Man salute the rising day
Of Liberty, but not adore.
'Tis Opportunity—no more—
A useful, not a sacred, ray.

AMBROSE BIERCE

It bringeth good, it bringeth ill,
As he possessing shall elect.
He maketh it of none effect
Who walketh not within thy will.

Give thou or more or less, as we
Shall serve the right or serve the wrong.
Confirm our freedom but so long
As we are worthy to be free.

Or—nearer menace!—when the band
Of feeble spirits cringe and plead
To the gigantic strength of Greed,
And fawn upon his iron hand;—

Nay, when the steps to state are worn
In hollows by the feet of thieves,
And Mammon sits among the sheaves
And chuckles while the reapers mourn;

Then stay thy miracle!—replace
The broken throne, repair the chain,
Restore the interrupted reign
And veil again thy patient face.

Lo! here upon the world's extreme
We stand with lifted arms and dare
By thine eternal name to swear
Our country, which so fair we deem—

Upon whose hills, a bannered throng,
The spirits of the sun display
Their flashing lances day by day
And hear the sea's pacific song—

AMBROSE BIERCE

Shall be so ruled in right and grace
That men shall say: "O, drive afield
The lawless eagle from the shield,
And call an angel to the place!"

CHARLES M. DICKINSON

1842—1923

HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH, reviewing the poetry of the nineteenth century, said of this poem, written in 1842: "*The Children* is the most popular poem ever written in America, with the exception of *Home, Sweet Home*." The author was a veteran newspaper editor.

The Children

WHEN the lessons and tasks are all ended,
And the school for the day is dismiss'd,
And the little ones gather around me,
To bid me good-night and be kiss'd:
Oh, the little white arms that encircle
My neck in a tender embrace!
Oh, the smiles that are halos of heaven,
Shedding sunshine of love on my face!

And when they are gone I sit dreaming
Of my childhood, too lovely to last:
Of love that my heart will remember
When it wakes to the pulse of the past,
Ere the world and its wickedness made me
A partner of sorrow and sin;
When the glory of God was about me,
And the glory of gladness within.

CHARLES M. DICKINSON

h! my heart grows as weak as a woman's,
And the fountains of feeling will flow,
When I think of the paths steep and stony,
Where the feet of the dear ones must go;
Of the mountains of sin hanging o'er them,
Of the tempest of fate blowing wild;
h! there is nothing on earth half so holy
As the innocent heart of a child.

They are idols of hearts and of households;
They are angels of God in disguise;
His sunlight still sleeps in their tresses,
His glory still beams in their eyes.
h! those truants from home and from heaven,
They have made me more manly and mild,
And I know how Jesus could liken
The kingdom of God to a child.

Ask not a life for the dear ones,
All radiant, as others have done,
But that life may have just enough shadow
To temper the glare of the sun:
I would pray God to guard them from evil,
But my prayer would bound back to myself;
h! a seraph may pray for a sinner,
But a sinner must pray for himself.

The twig is so easily bended,
I have banish'd the rule and the rod;
I have taught them the goodness of knowledge,
They have taught me the goodness of God;
My heart is a dungeon of darkness,
Where I shut them from breaking a rule;
My frown is sufficient correction;
My love is the law of the school.

CHARLES M. DICKINSON

I shall leave the old home in the autumn,
To traverse its threshold no more;
Ah! how shall I sigh for the dear ones
That meet me each morn at the door!
I shall miss the "good-nights" and the kisses,
And the gush of their innocent glee,
The group on the green, and the flowers
That are brought every morning to me.

I shall miss them at morn and at eve,
Their song in the school and the street;
I shall miss the low hum of their voices,
And the tramp of their delicate feet.
When the lessons and tasks are all ended,
And Death says, "The school is dismiss'd"
May the little ones gather around me,
To bid me good-night, and be kissed!

MAY RILEY SMITH

1842—

MRS. SMITH's poem *Sometime*, written when she was a young woman, has been copied and recited in many countries for many years, bringing consolation to the sorrowful. Less familiar, but of more recent authorship and of equal appeal are the following.

The Child in Me.

SHE follows me about My House of Life
(This happy little ghost of my dead youth!)
She has no part in Time's relentless strife,
She keeps her old simplicity and truth
And laughs at grim mortality—
This deathless child that stays with me—
This happy little ghost of my dead youth!

MAY RILEY SMITH

My House of Life is weather-stained with years—
(O Child in Me, I wonder why you stay).
The windows are bedimmed with rain of tears,
Its walls have lost their rose—its thatch is gray:
One after one its guests depart—
So dull a host is my old heart—
O Child in Me, I wonder Why *You* stay!

My jealous Age whose face I would forget
Pulls the bright flower you give me from my hair
And powders it with snow—and yet—and yet—
I love your dancing feet and jocund air,
And have no taste for caps of lace
To tie about my faded face:
I love to wear *your* flower in my hair!

O Child in Me, leave not My House of Clay
Until we pass together through its door!
When lights are out, and Life has gone away,
And we depart to come again no more,
We Comrades, who have traveled far,
Will hail the twilight and the Star
And gladly pass together through the Door!

The Last Dance

MIDNIGHT is past, and it is time to go:
Yet still I linger in the banquet hall
And with the dancers clap my hands and call
For one waltz more, although my step lags slow,
And my dark coachman waits for me I know
On the lowest stair. The petals fall
From the pale rose upon my breast, and all
The waxen tapers in their urns burn low.

MAY RILEY SMITH

Sweet partners in our all too brief quadrille,
Full loath am I to loose your clinging hands,
And so I dance again and tarry still
While on the stair my patient coachman stands.
And where he takes me when I go from here
Your arms are waiting for me, O my dear!

CHARLES WARREN STODDARD

1843—1909

Wind and Wave

O WHEN I hear at sea
The water on our lee,
I fancy that I hear the wind
That combs my hemlock tree:

But when beneath that tree
I listen eagerly,
I seem to hear the rushing wave
I heard far out at sea.

From "Tamalpais"

THE hollow moon, and up between
An oak with yard-long mosses, green
In sun light, now as dull as crêpe;
The mountain softened in its shape,
Its perfect symmetry attained—
And swathed in velvet folds, and stained
With dusty purple of the grape.

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

1844—1909

GILDER rendered conspicuous service to American letters. For years he was editor of the *Century Magazine*. The best of his verse was collected in *Five Books of Song*, 1894.

The Song of a Heathen

(SOJOURNING IN GALILEE, A. D. 32)

IF Jesus Christ is a man—
And only a man—I say
That of all mankind I cleave to him,
And to him will I cleave always.

If Jesus Christ is a God—
And the only God—I swear
I will follow Him through heaven and hell,
The earth, the sea, and the air!

A Song

YEARS have flown since I knew thee first,
And I know thee as water is known of thirst;
I knew thee of old at the first sweet sight,
Thou art strange to me, Love, to-night.

A Woman's Thought

I AM a woman—therefore
I may not
Call to him, cry to him,
Fly to him,
Bid him delay not!

And when he comes to me, I
must sit quiet:
Still as a stone—
All silent and cold.
If my heart riot—
Crush and defy it!
Should I grow bold—
Say one dear thing to him,
All my life
Cling to him—
What to atone
Is enough for my sinning!
This were the cost to me,
This were my winning—
That he were lost to me.

Not as a lover
At last if he part from me,
Tearing my heart from me—
Hurt beyond cure,—
Calm and demure
Then must I hold me—
In myself fold me—
Lest he discover;
Showing no sign to him
By look of mine to him

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

What he has been to me—
How my heart turns to him,
Follows him, yearns to him,
Prays him to love me.

Pity me, lean to me,
Thou God above me!

MAURICE THOMPSON

1844—1901

Written on a Fly-Leaf of Theocritus

[HOSE were good times, in olden days,
Of which the poet has his dreams,
When gods beset the woodland ways,
And lay in wait by all the streams.

He could be sure of something then
Severely simple, simply grand,
Keenly, subtly sweet, as when
Venus and Love went hand in hand.

Now I would give (such is my need)
All the world's store of rhythm and rhyme
To see Pan fluting on a reed
And with his goat-hoof keeping time!

JOHN B. (FATHER) TABB

1845—1909

A VIRGINIAN by birth, Tabb served in the Confederate Army during the Civil War, was captured, and while in prison formed an enduring friendship with another Confederate prisoner, the poet Sidney Lanier. Later he fell under Catholic influence and was converted from Episcopalianism to the Roman Church, preparing for priesthood and being ordained in 1884. Selections from his five books of verse were compiled by Alice Meyer. His editor, Theodore Maynard, says: "Tabb's central theme is not religion but nature. He was a poet of fact rather than of imagination; and he belongs to that group of singers among whom the greatest name is Herrick."

Evolution

OUT of the dusk a shadow,
Then, a spark:
Out of the cloud a silence,
Then, a lark:
Out of the heart a rapture,
Then, a pain:
Out of the dead cold ashes,
Life again.

The Sisters

THE waves forever move;
The hills forever rest:
Yet each the heavens approve,
And Love alike hath blessed
A Martha's household care,
A Mary's cloistered prayer.

JOHN B. (FATHER) TABB

Anonymous

ANONYMOUS—nor needs a name
To tell the secret whence the flame,
With light and warmth, and incense came
A new creation to proclaim.
So was it when, His labor done,
God saw His work, and smiled thereon:
His glory in the picture shone,
But name upon the canvas, none.

The Difference

UNC' SI, de Holy Bible say,
In speakin' of de jus',
Dat he do fall seben times a day:
Now, how's de sinner wuss?

"Well, chile, de slip may come to all,
But den de diff'ence foller;
For, ef you watch him when he fall,
De jus' man do not waller."

Fame

THEIR noonday never knows
What names immortal are:
'Tis night alone that shows
How star surpasseth star.

JOHN B. (FATHER) TABB

Poe's Critics

A CERTAIN tyrant, to disgrace
The more a rebel's resting place,
Compelled the people, every one
To hurl, in passing there, a stone;
Which done, the rugged pile became
A sepulcher to keep the name.

And thus it is with Edgar Poe:
Each passing critic has a throw,
Nor sees, defeating his intent,
How lofty grows the monument.

J. B. BROWN

Thalatta

CRY OF THE TEN THOUSAND

I STAND upon the summit of my years.
Behind, the toil, the camp, the march, the strife;
The wandering and the desert; vast, afar,
Beyond this weary way, behold! the Sea!
The sea o'erswept by clouds and winds and wings
By thoughts and wishes manifold, whose breath
Is freshness and whose mighty pulse is peace.
Palter no question of the dim Beyond;
Cut loose the bark; such voyage itself is rest;
Majestic motion, unimpeded scope,
A widening heaven, a current without care.
Eternity!—Deliverance, Promise, Course!
Time-tired souls salute thee from the shore.

LLOYD MIFFLIN

1846—1921

Sesostris

OLE Lord of Lords and very King of Kings,
He sits within the desert, carved in stone;
Mute, colossal, and alone,
Ancienter than memory of things.
Carved on his front the sacred beetle clings;
A grin sits on his lips, and in a frown
A life lives upon his forehead for a crown.
The affrighted ostrich dare not dust her wings
Near this Presence. The long caravan's
Red camels pause, and mute the Bedouins stare.
A symbol of past power more than man's
Ages doom. Kings look—and Kings despair:
Their scepters tremble in their jeweled hands
As dark thrones totter in the baleful air!

JOSEPH I. C. CLARKE

1846—1925

ON a March day in 1898, shortly after the sinking of the U. S. S. *Maine* in Havana harbor, as a prelude to the Spanish-American War, there appeared in small type on the editorial page of the New York *Sun*, Clarke's unforgettable poem, *The Fighting Race*, inspired by a number of Irish names among the dead. The verse immediately became famous in this country; and in Ireland they became a popular, if not a national, anthem. Clarke's poems are distinguished by fervor and Celtic grace. Clarke was my friend, and I shall never forget his genial spirit and his rugged manliness.

The Fighting Race

READ out the names!" and Burke sat back,
And Kelly drooped his head,
While Shea—they call him Scholar Jack—
Went down the list of the dead.

Officers, seamen, gunners, marines,
The crews of the gig and yawl,
The bearded man and the lad in his teens,
Carpenters, coal-passers—all.

Then, knocking the ashes from out his pipe,
Said Burke in an offhand way:

"We're all in that dead man's list, by Cripe!
Kelly and Burke and Shea."

"Well, here'to the Maine, and I'm sorry for Spain!
Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

JOSEPH I. C. CLARKE

Wherever there's Kellys there's trouble," said Burke
"Wherever fighting's the game,
Or a spice of danger in grown man's work,"
Said Kelly, "you'll find my name."
And do we fall short," said Burke, getting mad,
"When it's touch and go for life?"
Said Shea, "It's thirty-odd years, bedad,
Since I charged to drum and fife
Up Marye's Heights, and my old canteen
Stopped a rebel ball on its way.
There were blossoms of blood on our sprigs of green—
Kelly and Burke and Shea—
And the dead didn't brag." "Well, here's to the flag!"
Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

"I wish 'twas in Ireland, for there's the place,"
Said Burke, "that we'd die by right,
In the cradle of our soldier race,
After one good standup fight.
My grandfather fell on Vinegar Hill,
And fighting was not his trade;
But his rusty pike's in the cabin still,
With Hessian blood on the blade."
Aye, aye," said Kelly, "the pikes were great
When the word was 'clear the way!'
We were thick on the roll in ninety-eight—
Kelly and Burke and Shea."
Well, here's to the pike and the sword and the like!"
Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

And Shea, the scholar, with rising joy,
Said, "We were at Ramillies.
We left our bones at Fontenoy
And up in the Pyrenees.
Before Dunkirk, on Landen's plain,

JOSEPH I. C. CLARKE

Cremona, Lille and Ghent,
We're all over Austria, France and Spain,
Wherever they pitched a tent.
We've died for England from Waterloo
To Egypt and Dargai;
And still there's enough for a corps or a crew,
Kelly and Burke and Shea."
"Well, here's to good honest fighting blood!"
Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

"Oh, the fighting races don't die out,
If they seldom die in bed,
For love is first in their hearts, no doubt,"
Said Burke; then Kelly said:
"When Michael, the Irish Archangel, stands,
The angel with the sword,
And the battle dead from a hundred lands
Are ranged in one big horde,
Our line, that for Gabriel's trumpet waits,
Will stretch three deep that day,
From Jehoshaphat to the Golden Gates—
Kelly and Burke and Shea."
"Well, here's thank God for the race and the sod!"
Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

EDGAR FAWCETT

1847—1904

Fireflies

SAW, one sultry night above a swamp,
The darkness throbbing with their golden pomp!
And long my dazzled sight did they entrance
With the weird chaos of their dizzy dance!
Quicker than yellow leaves, when gales despoil,
Quivered the brilliance of their mute turmoil,
Within whose light was intricately blent
Perpetual rise, perpetual descent.
As though their scintillant flickerings had met
The vague meshes of some airy net!
And now mysteriously I seemed to guess,
While watching their tumultuous loveliness,
That fervor of deep passion strangely thrives
In the warm richness of these tropic lives,
Whose wings can never tremble but they show
These hearts of living fire that beat below!

JOHN VANCE CHENEY

1848—1922

WHILE librarian in charge of great libraries, Cheney found time to publish several volumes of poetry including *Thistle-Drift* (1887); *Wood Blooms* (1888) *Out of the Silence* (1897); *Lyrics* (1901). In 1900 his poem-reply to my *Man With the Hoe* received first prize in a competition conducted by the *New York Sun*, to which five thousand poems were submitted. Collis P. Huntington of the Central Pacific Railway had offered a big prize for a reply to my Hoe-poem. When Cheney, my life-long friend, won the contest, I wrote to him, saying: "Your reply is good poetry but bad philosophy; for you declare in substance, that we of 'the upper crust' must not do any physical bread-labor. Hence the Almighty created the hoe-man to drudge and slave for us: he was 'cast for the gap.' Now, I say that no man is cast for the gap; every man is created for the forward march, for the eternal ascension. It is our sacred duty as brothers of the hoe-man to keep the gates of opportunity open before him. But you Cheney, see him chained to his drudgery, and you see the Almighty as the wielder of the hammer that riveted the chains. Your poem therefore is black with pessimism. It is perhaps the most undemocratic and unAmerican of all poems."

The Happiest Heart

WHO drives the horses of the sun
Shall lord it but a day;
Better the lowly deed were done,
And kept the humble way.

JOHN VANCE CHENEY

The rust will find the sword of fame,
The dust will hide the crown;
Ay, none shall nail so high his name
Time will not tear it down.

The happiest heart that ever beat
Was in some quiet breast
That found the common daylight sweet.
And left to Heaven the rest.

The Man with a Hoe

Reply to EDWIN MARKHAM'S "*The Man with the Hoe*"

*Let us a little permit Nature to take her own way: she
better understands her own affairs than we.—Montaigne.*

NATURE reads not our labels, "great" and "small":
Accepts she one and all

Who, striving, win and hold the vacant place:
All are of royal race.

Lim, there, rough-cast, with rigid arm and limb,
The Mother moulded him,

Of his rude realm ruler and demigod,
Lord of the rock and sod.

With Nature is no "better" and no "worse,"
In this bared head no curse.

JOHN VANCE CHENEY

Humbled it is and bowed; so is he crowned
Whose kingdom is the ground.

Diverse the burdens on the one stern road
Where bears each back its load;

Varied the toil, but neither high nor low.
With pen, or sword, or hoe,

He that has put out strength, lo, he is strong;
Of him with spade or song

Nature but questions,—“This one, shall he stay?”
She answers “Yea” or “Nay,”

“Well, ill, he digs, he sings”; and he bides on,
Or shudders, and is gone.

Strength shall he have, the toiler, strength and grace,
So fitted to his place

As he leaned, there, an oak where sea winds blow,
Our brother with the hoe.

No blot, no monster, no unsightly thing,
The soil's long-lineaged king;

His changeless realm, he knows it and commands;
Erect enough he stands,

Tall as his toil. Nor does he bow unblest:
Labor he has, and rest.

Need was, need is, and need will ever be
For him and such as he;

JOHN VANCE CHENEY

ast for the gap, with gnarlëd arm and limb,
he Mother moulded him,—

ong wrought, and moulded him with mother's care,
efore she set him there.

nd aye she gives him, mindful of her own,
eace of the plant, the stone;

ea, since above his work he may not rise,
e makes the fields his skies.

e! she that bore him, and metes out the lot,
e serves her. Vex him not

o scorn the rock whence he was hewn, the pit
nd what was digged from it;

est he no more in native virtue stand,
ne earth-sword in his hand,

at follow sorry phantoms to and fro,
nd let a kingdom go.

FRANCIS SALTUS SALTUS

1849—1889

The Sphinx Speaks

CARVED by a mighty race whose vanished hands
Formed empires more destructible than I,
In sultry silence I forever lie,
Wrapped in the shifting garment of the sands.
Below me, Pharaoh's scintillating bands
With clashings of loud cymbals have passed by,
And the eternal reverence of the sky
Falls royally on me and all my lands.

The record of the future broods in me:

I have with worlds of blazing stars been crowned,
But none my subtle mystery hath known
Save one, who made his way through blood and sea,
The Corsican, prophetic and renowned,
To whom I spake, one awful night alone!

EUGENE FIELD

1850—1895

HIS droll and original minstrel of the Mid-West is what Stedman calls the "Yorick of American poetry," rising with his contemporary, James Whitcomb Riley, the function of being "childhood's born laureate, and no less scholar by nature than a man of infinite humor and of suitable, if sometimes too eccentric, jest." His lyric talent is best displayed in *A Little Book of Western Verse*, *The Songs of Childhood* and *Songs and Other Verses*.

Little Boy Blue

THE little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and staunch he stands;
The little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket moulds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair;
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now don't you go till I come," he said,
"And don't you make any noise!"
So, toddling off to his trundle bed,
He dreamt of the pretty toys;
And, as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
Oh! the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true!

EUGENE FIELD

Ay, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place,
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face;
And they wonder, as waiting the long years
through
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue,
Since he kissed them and put them there.

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod

WYNKEN, Blynken, and Nod one night
Sailed off in a wooden shoe—

Sailed on a river of crystal light
Into a sea of dew.

"Where are you going, and what do you wish?"
The old moon asked the three.

"We have come to fish for the herring-fish
That live in this beautiful sea;
Nets of silver and gold have we,"

Said Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a song,
As they rocked in the wooden shoe;
And the wind that sped them all night long
Ruffled the waves of dew;

The little stars were the herring-fish
That lived in the beautiful sea.

"Now cast your nets wherever you wish—
Never afraid are we!"

EUGENE FIELD

o cried the stars to the fishermen three,
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

night long their nets they threw
To the stars in the twinkling foam—
en down from the skies came the wooden shoe,
Bringing the fishermen home:
as all so pretty a sail, it seemed
as if it could not be;
d some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed
Of sailing that beautiful sea;
ut I shall name you the fishermen three:
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

ynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
nd Nod is a little head,
d the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
s a wee one's trundle-bed;
shut your eyes while Mother sings
Of wonderful sights that be,
d you shall see the beautiful things
s you rock on the misty sea
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three,—
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

FLORENCE EARLE COATES

1850—

A NATIVE and life-long resident of Philadelphia, M Coates was a founder of the Contemporary Club, a was for many years president of the Browning Society that city. She has been unanimously elected poet laureate of Pennsylvania by its State Federation of Women's Clubs. Her *Collected Poems* were published in 1916.

Song of Life

MAIDEN of the laughing eyes,
Primrose-kirtled, wingèd free,
Virgin daughter of the skies—
Joy—whom gods and mortals prize,
Share thy smiles with me!

Yet—lest I, unheeding, borrow
Pleasure that today endears,
And benumbs the heart to-morrow—
Turn not wholly from me, Sorrow!
Let me share thy tears!

Give me of thy fulness, Life!
Pulse and passion, power, breath,
Vision pure, heroic strife—
Give me of thy fulness, Life!
Nor deny me death!

FLORENCE EARLE COATES

The Poetry of Earth

THERE is always room for beauty: memory

A myriad lovely blossoms may enclose,
t, whatsoe'er hath been, there still must be
Room for another rose.

ough skylark, throstle, whitethroat, whip-poor-will,
And nightingale earth's echoing chantries throng,
en comes another singer, there will be
Room for another song.

The Morning-Glory

WAS it worth while to paint so fair
Thy every leaf—to vein with faultless art
h petal, taking the boon light and air
Of summer so to heart?

bring thy beauty unto perfect flower,
Then, like a passing fragrance or a smile,
ish away, beyond recovery's power—
Was it, frail bloom, worth while?

y silence answers: "Life was mine!
nd I, who pass without regret or grief,
ve cared the more to make my moment fine,
ecause it was so brief.

its first radiance I have seen
he sun!—why tarry then till comes the night?
o my way, content that I have been
art of the morning light!"

DANIEL HENRY JUNIOR HOLMES

1851—1908

YOUNG HOLMES took the tiny snap-shots of verse from Mother Goose and enlarged them into full-length portraits. It is a remarkable gallery. More than half his poems are printed in *The Bibelot*, that treasury of rare works of genius accumulated by Thomas Bird Mosher and preserved for posterity.

Margery Daw

See-Saw! Margery Daw!
Sold her bed to lie upon straw;
Was she not a dirty slut
To sell her bed, and live in dirt?

AND yet perchance, were the circumstance
But known, of Margery's grim romance
As sacred a veil might cover her then
As the pardon which fell on the Magdalen.

It's a story told so often, so old,
So drearily common, so wearily cold;
A man's adventure—a poor girl's fall—
And a sinless scapegoat born—that's all.

She was simple and young, and the song was sung
With so sweet a voice, in so strange a tongue,
That she follow'd blindly the Devil-song
Till the ground gave way, and she lay headlong.

DANIEL HENRY JUNIOR HOLMES

and then: not a word, not a plea for her heard,
Not a hand held out to the one who had err'd,
Her Christian sisters foremost to condemn—
God pity the woman who falls before them!

They closed the door for evermore
On the contrite heart which repented sore;
And she stood alone, in the outer night,
To feed her baby as best she might.

So she sold her bed, for its daily bread,
The gown off her back, the shawl off her head;
Till her all lay piled on the pawner's shelf,
When she clench'd her teeth and sold herself.

And so it came that Margery's name
Went into a burden of Sorrow and Shame;
And Margery's face grew familiar in
The market-place where they trade in sin.

What use to dwell on this premature Hell?
Nay, suffice it to say the child did well,
Till one night that Margery prowled the town,
Sickness was stalking and struck her down.

Her beauty pass'd, and she stood aghast
At the presence of want, and stripped, at the last
Of all she had to be pawned or sold,
To keep her darling from hunger and cold.

And the baby pined, till Margery, blind
With hunger of fever, in body and mind,
At dusk, when Death seem'd close at hand,
Snatch'd a loaf of bread from a baker's stand.

DANIEL HENRY JUNIOR HOLMES

Some Samaritan saw Margery Daw,
And lock'd her in gaol to lie upon straw:
Not a sparrow falls, they say—Oh, well!
God was not looking when Margery fell.

With irons girt, in her felon's shirt,
Poor Margery lies in sorrow and dirt,
A gaunt, sullen woman untimely gray,
With the look of a wild beast brought to bay.

She saw! Margery Daw!
What a wise and bountiful thing, the Law!
It makes all smooth—for she's out of her head,
And her brat is provided for. It's dead.

HENRY VAN DYKE

1852—

THE remarkable versatility of Dr. Van Dyke is shown in the variety of his work as poet, preacher, teacher and diplomat. He was professor of English literature at Princeton (1900-23) and United States Minister to Netherlands and Luxemburg (1913-17). His *Collected Poems* appeared in 1911. He was the chief editor of an anthology, *British and American Verse*. Dr. Van Dyke is one of the valiant veterans standing for the old tried ideal of literary art.

The Maryland Yellow-Throat

WHILE May bedecks the naked trees
With tassels and embroideries,
And many blue-eyed violets beam
Along the edges of the stream,
I hear a voice that seems to say,
Now near at hand, now far away,
 "Witchery—witchery—witchery."

HENRY VAN DYKE

An incantation so serene,
So innocent, befits the scene:
There's magic in that small bird's note:
See, there he flits—the yellow-throat:
A living sunbeam tipped with wings,
A spark of light that shines and sings
 "Witchery—witchery—witchery."

You prophet with a pleasant name,
If out of Mary-land you came,
You know the way that thither goes
Where Mary's lovely garden grows:
Fly swiftly back to her, I pray,
And try to call her down this way,
 "Witchery—witchery—witchery!"

Tell her to leave her cockle-shells,
And all her little silver bells
That blossom into melody,
And all her maids less fair than she.
She does not need these pretty things,
For everywhere she comes, she brings
 "Witchery—witchery—witchery!"

The woods are greening overhead,
And flowers adorn each mossy bed:
The waters babble as they run—
One thing is lacking, only one:
If Mary were but here to-day,
I would believe your charming lay,
 "Witchery—witchery—witchery!"

HENRY VAN DYKE

Along the shady road I look—
Who's coming now across the brook?
A woodland maid, all robed in white—
The leaves dance round her with delight,
The stream laughs out beneath her feet—
Sing, merry bird, the charm's complete,
 "Witchery—witchery—witchery!"

America for Me

'TIS fine to see the Old World and travel up
 down
Among the famous palaces and cities of renown,
To admire the crumbly castles and the statues of
 kings

But now I think I've had enough of antiquated things

So it's home again, and home again, America for me
My heart is turning home again and there I long to
In the land of youth and freedom, beyond the ocean
 bars,

Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag is full of
 stars.

Oh, London is a man's town, there's power in the
And Paris is a woman's town, with flowers in the
And it's sweet to dream in Venice, and it's great to
 study Rome;

But when it comes to living there is no place like home

I like the German fir-woods in green battalions drilled
I like the gardens of Versailles with flashing fountains
 filled;

HENRY VAN DYKE

oh, to take your hand, my dear, and ramble for a day
ne friendly western woodland where Nature has her sway!

ow that Europe's wonderful, yet something seems to lack!

Past is too much with her, and the people looking back.

the glory of the Present is to make the Future free—

love our land for what she is and what she is to be.

it's home again, and home again, America for me!

ant a ship that's westward bound to plough the

rolling sea,

he blessed Land of Room Enough, beyond the ocean

bars,

re the air is full of sunlight and the flag is full of

stars.

NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

1852—

Man's Hidden Side

HE moon, which earthward turns her radiant face

As if to us she would herself confide,

onceals a secret, a mysterious side

Whereof no mortal eye can dare to trace

dark-environed clue. It is a place

Where strange abysmal phantasms may abide,

Where Gloom's abhorrent progenies may hide,

imprisoned by the ebon walls of Space.

NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

So each of us, however gay and light
To those who deem they know us we appear,
However frankly we expose to sight
Our alternating phases year by year,
Keeps turned away a side immersed in night,
And never shown to those we hold most dear.

CHARLES ERSKINE SCOTT WOOD

1852—

C. E. S. WOOD was educated at West Point, but
doned an army career after ten years of military
service, and became a practising lawyer in Portland,
Oregon, and later in San Francisco. In 1901 appeared
his *A Book of Tales, Being Myths of the North American
Indians*, followed by a symbolic *Masque of Love* (1902).
His growing social passion finally found expression in
his crowning volume, *The Poet in the Desert*, a terse
arraignment of modern industrialism in its iniquitous
aspects. I do not altogether agree with Mr. Wood's
extreme Libertarian ideas; but we can all agree with
his prophet-like attack on social and industrial wrongs.
His powerful, impassioned protest is lifted above
pulpiteering by frequent flashes of poetry.

The Desert

SHE is a queen, seated on a throne of gold
In the Hall of Silence.
She insists upon humility:
She insists upon meditation:
She insists that the soul be free:
She requires an answer:
She demands the final reply to thoughts
Which cannot be answered.

CHARLES ERSKINE SCOTT WOOD

She lights the Sun for a torch
And sets up the great cliffs as sentinels.
The morning and the evening are curtains
Before her chamber.
She is cruel and invites victims,
Restlessly moving her wrists and ankles,
Which are loaded with sapphires.
Her brown breasts flash with opals.

When I Walk Alone

WHEN I walk alone and look into the sky,
I do not see the watchful orbs of night,
Only the melancholy eyes of the Unborn,
Staring at me with the implacable demand:
"Must we, too, die not knowing Joy?"

When in the leafless trees I hear
The sighing of the winter wind,
It is to me the voices of little children
Without childhood.
The sobbing of the brooks quarreling
To their stones,
Is the sobbing of mothers
Who curse motherhood. . . .
The cries of the poor are more melancholy
Than the wail of the curlew in the night.

The Mammon Monster

I SEE a monster.
His feet are of gold; his hands are of gold;
Golden is his head and his legs are golden.
His heart is of clay.

CHARLES ERSKINE SCOTT WOOD

His greedy hands are folded upon
His swollen belly.
Into his maw flows an endless procession:
Men with grey faces, women with sunken eyes,
And the little children who have never laughed.

Sweat-Shop Slaves

I SEE my white-faced sisters of the foul tenement
Stooping over their needles,
Which flash faster than the wings of the dragon-fly,
Or the fangs of the quick-coiling serpent.
Their fingers are yellow, the fingers of the dead;
The thin fingers of those who have died of hunger.
Without pause, not daring to lose a moment,
They snatch at the crust of their starvation;
Bending close above the garments,
And the murmur of their hearts is continually:
"Lest we starve! Lest we starve!"

I see my haggard sisters of the prisoning factories;
Their eyes sunken and their mouths chiseled by grief;
Their yellow hands are the talons of an eagle.
The clamorous looms catch up the souls of the workers
And weave them into cloth;
The souls of submissive women woven into cloth;
The woman, left a husk before the loom.

Oh, the din of the mind-madding looms,
The devil-dance of the shuttles!

The Devil's Auction

THE Devil's auction:

The daughters of the Poor for sale.

Three dollars a week; three-and-a-half;

Four, five; five-and-a-half.

The innocent young mothers

Sold at the Devil's auction.

Eyes more precious than agates,

Chalcedony or sapphires,

Shining pools of the evening,

Wherein the stars dance,

And under the fringe of the border

Runs a liquid moon.

Cheeks more delicate than the wild-rose

Of the canyons;

Bosoms pure as pond-lilies

Swaying on ripples.

Lips dewy as Aurora new bathed

In the flattery of orient seas.

My sisters, my trusting little sisters,

Shall you not snatch at roses

Drooping heavy for the picking?

Shall you not walk in the poppied paths?

Shall you be hungry and taste not of the grapes?

EDWIN MARKHAM

1852—

HEADNOTE BY JOANNNA KILCOLMAN

ALTHOUGH Mr. Markham's work does not fall under a general category covered by *The Book of Poets*, nevertheless, he has been persuaded to let the Publisher include a few of his five-hundred poems, all of them being the outgrowth of his long reading and thinking indicated by this voluminous collection and commentary.

His books of verse are: *The Man with the Hoe and Other Poems*, *Lincoln and Other Poems*, *Shoes of Happiness and Other Poems*, *Gates of Paradise and Other Poems*.

He began writing poetry when he was a boy herding sheep and cattle on his mother's range on the coast mountains of California. However, he did not become known to the world until the dawn of the twentieth century, when his poem, *The Man With the Hoe*, flashed suddenly in both hemispheres. It has been translated into nearly forty languages, and has been copied into the newspapers and magazines of all lands. It is a protest against injustice and an appeal for the rights of the toiling millions in the low abyss of labor. It has been called, "The battle-cry of the next thousand years."

Louis Untermeyer, in his *Modern American Poetry*, says: "As Whitman was the poet of the Social Consciousness, Markham is the poet of the Social Conscience, and he is off the movement toward industrial democracy in American poetry."

Edwin Markham's most important poems printed since *The Man With the Hoe* are *Our Israfel* (the winner of the International Prize offered by *The English Poetry Review* for a poem on Edgar Allan Poe), and *The Ball of the Gallows-Bird*. These two poems, with *Virgilia* and *The Crowning Hour*, are his favorites among his last printed poems.

EDWIN MARKHAM

Child of My Heart

CHILD heart,
Wild heart!
What can I bring you
What can I sing you,
You who have come from a glory afar,
Called into Time from a secret star?

Fleet one,
Sweet one!
Whose was the wild hand
Shaped you in child-land,
Pouring the soul as a fearful fire,
Sending you forth at a dream's desire?

Strong child,
Song child!
Who can unravel
All your long travel
Out of the Mystery, birth after birth—
Out of the dim worlds deeper than Earth?

Mad thing,
Glad thing!
How will Life tame you?
How will God name you?
All that I know is that you are to me
Wind over water, star on the sea.

Dear heart,
Near heart!
Long is the journey,
Hard is the tourney:
Would I could be by your side if you fall—
Would that my own heart could suffer it all!

Lincoln, the Man of the People

WHEN the Norn Mother saw the Whirlw
 Hour

Greatening and darkening as it hurried on,
 She left the Heaven of Heroes and came down
 To make a man to meet the mortal need.
 She took the tried clay of the common road—
 Clay warm yet with the genial heat of Earth,
 Dashed through it all a strain of prophecy;
 Tempered the heap with thrill of human tears,
 Then mixed a laughter with the serious stuff.
 Into the shape she breathed a flame to light
 That tender, tragic, ever-changing face;
 And laid on him a sense of the Mystic Powers,
 Moving—all hushed—behind the mortal veil.
 Here was a man to hold against the world,
 A man to match the mountains and the sea.

The color of the ground was in him, the red earth
 The smack and tang of elemental things:
 The rectitude and patience of the cliff,
 The good-will of the rain that loves all leaves,
 The friendly welcome of the wayside well,
 The courage of the bird that dares the sea,
 The gladness of the wind that shakes the corn;
 The pity of the snow that hides all scars;
 The secrecy of streams that make their way
 Under the mountain to the rifted rock,
 The tolerance and equity of light
 That gives as freely to the shrinking flower
 As to the great oak flaring to the wind—
 To the grave's low hill as to the Matterhorn
 That shoulders out the sky. Sprung from the West
 He drank the valorous youth of a new world.

EDWIN MARKHAM

the strength of virgin forests braced his mind,
the hush of spacious prairies stilled his soul,
his words were oaks in acorns; and his thoughts
were roots that firmly gripped the granite truth.

From log cabin to the Capitol,
the fire was on his spirit, one resolve—
to send the keen ax to the root of wrong,
clearing a free way for the feet of God,
the eyes of conscience testing every stroke,
to make his deed the measure of a man.
He built the rail-pile as he built the State,
pouring his rugged strength through every blow:
the grip that swung the ax in Illinois
was on the pen that set a people free.

He came the Captain with the mighty heart;
and when the judgment thunders split the house,
renching the rafters from their ancient rest,
he held the ridgepole up, and spiked again
the rafters of the Home. He held his place—
he held the long purpose like a growing tree—
he held on through blame and faltered not at praise—
and when he fell in whirlwind, he went down
as when a lordly cedar, green with boughs,
comes down with a great shout upon the hills,
and leaves a lonesome place against the sky.

Outwitted

HE drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in!

EDWIN MARKHAM

The Man with the Hoe

*Written after seeing Millet's world-famous painting of
a brutalized toiler.*

God made man in his own image
in the image of God made He him.—*Genesis.*

BOWED by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over sea and land;
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power
To feel the passion of Eternity?
Is this the dream He dreamed who shaped the suns
And marked their ways upon the ancient deep?
Down all the caverns of Hell to their last gulf
There is no shape more terrible than this—
More tongued with censure of the world's blind greed
More filled with signs and portents for the soul—
More packed with danger to the universe.

What gulfs between him and the seraphim!
Slave of the wheel of labor, what to him
Are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?
What the long reaches of the peaks of song,

EDWIN MARKHAM

the rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?
through this dread shape the suffering ages look;
me's tragedy is in that aching stoop;
through this dread shape humanity betrayed,
undered, profaned and disinherited,
ies protest to the Powers that made the world,
protest that is also prophecy.

masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
this the handiwork you give to God,
his monstrous thing distorted and soul-quenched?
ow will you ever straighten up this shape;
ouch it again with immortality;
ve back the upward looking and the light;
build in it the music and the dream;
ake right the immemorial infamies,
rfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?

masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
ow will the future reckon with this man?
ow answer his brute question in that hour
hen whirlwinds of rebellion shake all shores?
ow will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
ith those who shaped him to the thing he is—
hen this dumb Terror shall rise to iudge the world,
ter the silence of the centuries?

EDWIN MARKHAM

Virgilia

I

HAD we two gone down the world together,
I had made fair ways for the feet of Song,
And the world's fang been but a foam-soft feather,
The world that works us wrong.

If you had but stayed when the old sweet wonder
Was a precious pain in my pulsing side;
Ah, why did you hurry our lives asunder—
You, born to be my bride?

What sent it upon me—my soul importunes—
All the grief of the world in a little span,
All the tears and fears, all the fates and fortunes,
That the heart holds for a man?

Is this then the grief that the first gods kneaded
Into all joy that the strange world brings?
Did the tears fall into the heap unheeded,
These tears in mortal things?

But why was it that the whole world wasted,
This you will know when they count the tears,
After the dust of the grave is tasted,
After this noise of years.

Yet some things stay though a world lies broken,
I keep some things that were dear of old—
That first kiss spared and that last word spoken
And the glint of your hair's dark gold.

EDWIN MARKHAM

o you mind that hour in the soft sweet morning
When I held you fast in divine alarms,
Then my soul stood up like a god adorning
His body with bright arms?

orget it not till the crowns are crumbled
And the swords of the kings are rent with rust—
orget it not till the hills lie humbled,
And the springs of the seas run dust.

II

hat was I back in the world's first wonder?—
An elf-child found on an ocean-reef,
sea-child nursed by the surge and thunder,
And marked for the lyric grief.

mind me well how the waves' edge whitened
As the shapes of the storm went whirling by—
ow I laughed and ran when the loud void lightened,
And tempest shook the sky.

o I will go down by the way of the willows,
And whisper it out to the mother Sea,
o the soft sweet shores and the long bright billows,
The dream that cannot be.

here will be help for the soul's great trouble
Where the sea's heart sings to the listening ear,
Where the high gray cliff in the pool hangs double,
And the moon is misting the mere.

Was down in the sea that your soul took fashion,
O strange Love born of the white sea-wave!

EDWIN MARKHAM

And only the sea and her lyric passion
Can ease the wound you gave.

So I will go down to the wide wild places,
Where the calm cliffs look on the shores around;
I will rest in the power of their great grave faces
And the gray hush of the ground.

On a cliff's high head a gray gull clamors,
But down at the base is the Devil's brew,
And the swing of arms and the heave of hammers,
And the white flood roaring through.

There on the cliff is the sea-bird's tavern,
And there with the wild things I'll find a home,
Laugh with the lightning, shout with the cavern,
Run with the feathering foam.

I will climb down where the nests are hanging,
And the young birds scream to the swinging deep;
Where the rocks and the iron winds are clanging,
And the long waves lift and leap.

I will thread the shores to the cavern hollows,
Where the edge of the wave runs white and thin;
I will sing to the surge and the foam that follows
When the dark tides thunder in.

I will go out where the sea-birds travel,
And mix my soul with the wind and sea;
Let the green waves weave and the gray rains rave
And the tides go over me.

The Sea is the mother of songs and sorrows,
And out of her wonder our wild loves come;

EDWIN MARKHAM

and so it will be through the long to-morrows,
Till all our lips are dumb.

he knows all sighs and she knows all sinning,
And they whisper out in her breaking wave:
he has known it all since the far beginning,
Since the grief of that first grave.

he shakes the heart with her stars and thunder
And her soft low word when the winds are late;
For the sea is Woman, the sea is Wonder—
Her other name is Fate!

There is daring and dream in her billows breaking—
In the power of her beauty our griefs forget:
he can ease the heart of the long, long aching,
And bury old regret.

III

Will you find rest as our ways dissever?
Will the gladness grow as the days increase?
Howbeit, I leave on your soul forever
The word of eternal peace.

will go the road and my song shall save me,
Though grief may stay as the heart's old guest:
will finish the work that the strange God gave me,
And then pass on to rest.

will go back to the great world-sorrow,
To the millions bearing the double load—
The fate of to-day and the fear of to-morrow:
I will taste the dust of the road.

EDWIN MARKHAM

I will go back to the pains and the pities
That break the world with moan;
I will forget in the grief of the cities
The burden of my own.

There in the world-grief my own grief humbles,
My wild hour melts in the days to be,
As the wild white foam of a river crumbles,
Forgotten in the sea.

IRWIN RUSSELL

1853—1879

De Fust Banjo

GO 'way, fiddle! folks is tired o' hearin' yo
a-squawkin'.

Keep silence fur you' betters! don't you heah de banj
talkin'?

About de 'possum's tail she's gwine to lecter—ladies
listen!

About de ha'r whut isn't dar, an' why de ha'r is missin'

"Dar's gwine to be a' oberflow," said Noah, lookin'
solemn—

Fur Noah tuk de "Herald," an' he read de ribbe
column—

An' so he sot his hands to wuk a-clarin' timber-patche

An' 'lowed he's gwine to build a boat to beat de steama
Natchez.

IRWIN RUSSELL

Ol' Noah kep' a-nailin' an' a-chippin' an' a-sawin';
An' all de wicked neighbors kep' a-laughin' an'
a-pshawin';

But Noah didn't min' 'em, knowin' whut was gwine to
happen:

An' forty days an' forty nights de rain it kep' a-drappin'.

Now, Noah had done cotched a lot ob ebry sort o'
beas'es—

Ob all de shows a-trabbelin', it beat 'em all to pieces!

He had a Morgan colt an' sebral head o' Jarsey cattle—

An' druv 'em 'board de Ark as soon's he heered de thun-
der rattle.

Den sech anoder fall ob rain! It come so awful hebbly,
De ribber riz immejitly, an' busted troo de leebbee;

De people all wuz drownded out—'cep Noah an' de
critters,

An' men he'd hired to wuk de boat—an' one to mix de
bitters.

De Ark she kep' a-sailin' an' a-sailin' an' a-sailin';

De lion got his dander up, an' like to bruk de palin';

De sarpints hissed; de painters yelled; tel', whut wid
all de fussin',

You c'udn't hardly heah de mate a-bossin' 'roun' an'
cussin'.

Now Ham, de only nigger whut was runnin' on de
packet,

Got lonesome in de barber-shop, an' c'u'dn't stan' de
racket;

An' so, fur to amuse he-se'f, he steamed some wood an'
bent it,

An' soon he had a banjo made—de fust dat wuz
invented.

IRWIN RUSSELL

He wet de ledder, stretched it on; made bridge an
screws an' aprin;

An' fitted in a proper neck—'twuz berry long an
taprin';

He tuk some tin, an' twisted him a thimble fur to
ring it:

An' den de mighty question riz: how wuz he gwine
to string it?

De 'possum had as fine a tail as dis dat I's a-singin';
De har's so long an' thick an' strong,—des fit fur banjo
stringin';

Dat nigger shaved 'em off as short as washday-dinner
graces:

An' sorted ob 'em by de size—f'om little E's to basses

He strung her, tuned her, struck a jig,—'twuz "*Nebber
min' de wedder*,"—

She soun' like forty-lebben bands a-playin' all togedder
Some went to pattin'; some to dancin': Noah called de
figgers;

An' Ham he sot an' knocked de tune, de happiest ob
niggers!

Now, sence dat time—it's mighty strange—dere's not de
slichtes' showin'

Ob any ha'r at all upon de 'possum's tail a-growin';
An' curi's, too, dat nigger's ways: his people nebber los
'em—

Fur whar you finds de nigger—dar's de banjo an' de
'possum!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY *

1853—1916

THEY didn't call him James Whitcomb Riley 'round about where I lived. Taking the liberty of old friends, they telescoped the James, amputated the Whitcomb, and said only Jim Riley; and they pronounced the words also with a loving accent as they might have said "Sweet Briar Rose" or "wine-sap apple" or "the old folks at home" or any other tender fragrant phrase, bringing dear memories of summer garden or winter hearth.

Far more widely perhaps than any other singer of our generation, Riley has got over to the plain people of village and farm. He has bound into scented sheaves for them the old lavendered memories of back home and long ago. There is sometimes a tear in his eye at the pathos as well as a twinkle in his eye at the humor; but love is always in his heart.

What American does not recall Riley's landscapes picturing such happy haunts as "the old swimmin' hole," and the town where the folks were "so happy and so pore"? What American does not rejoice in Riley's spell of weather "long about knee-deep in June," or "when the frost is on the punkin"? Who of us has not chortled and perhaps choked a little over "the raggedy man" and over "grandfather Squeers" and over "little orphant Annie"?

Happily these beloved folk whose quips and quirks make us "smily round the lips and teary round the lashes," are held fast together by the magic of Riley's rhymes and rhythms. They will long be the friendly roadside and bedside companions of the common people.

He has now gone on to other roads and other hearths and other friends:

Joy attend him, Love defend him!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

A Life-Lesson

THERE! little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your doll, I know
And your tea-set blue,
And your play-house, too,
Are things of the long ago;
But childish troubles will soon pass by.—
There! little girl don't cry!

There! little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your slate, I know;
And the glad, wild ways
Of your school-girl days
Are things of the long ago;
But life and love will soon come by.—
There! little girl, don't cry!

There! little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your heart, I know;
And the rainbow gleams
Of your youthful dreams
Are things of the long ago;
But Heaven holds all for which you sigh.—
There! little girl, don't cry!

Bereaved

LET me come in where you sit weeping—ay,
Let me, who have not any child to die,
Weep with you for the little one whose love
I have known nothing of.

* From the Biographical Edition of the complete works of James Whitcomb Riley. Copyright, 1913. Used by special permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

The little arms that slowly, slowly loosed
Their pressure round your neck; the hands you used
To kiss.—Such arms—such hands I never knew.
May I not weep with you?

Fain would I be of service—say some thing,
Between the tears, that would be comforting—
But ah! so sadder than yourselves am I,
Who have no child to die.

When She Comes Home

WHEN she comes home again! A thousand ways
I fashion, to myself, the tenderness
Of my glad welcome: I shall tremble, yes;
And touch her, as when first in the old days
I touched her girlish hand, nor dared upraise
Mine eyes, such was my faint heart's sweet distress.
Then silence: and the perfume of her dress:
The room will sway a little, and a haze
Shall cloud eyesight—soul-sight, even—for a space;
And tears—yes, and the ache here in the throat,
To know that I so ill deserve the place
Her arms make for me; and the sobbing note
That stays with kisses, ere the tearful face
Again is hidden in the old embrace.

Little Orphant Annie

LITTLE Orphant Annie's come to our house to
stay,
An' wash the cups and saucers up, an' brush the crumbs
away,

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

An' shoo the chickens off the porch, an' dust the heart
 an' sweep,
An' make the fire, an' bake the bread, an' earn h
 board-an'-keep;
An' all us other children, when the supper things
 done,
We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fu
A-list'nin' to the witch-tales 'at Annie tells about,
An' the Gobble-uns 'at gits you
 Ef you
 Don't
 Watch
 Out!

Onc't they was a little boy wouldn't say his pray'rs-
An' when he went to bed at night, away up-stairs,
His mammy heerd him holler, an' his daddy heerd hi
 bawl,
An' when they turn't the kivvers down, he wasn't the
 at all!
An' they seeked him in the rafter-room, an' cubby-hol
 an' press,
An' seeked him up the chimblly flue, an' ever'-where
 I guess;
But all they ever found was thist his pants an round
 about!
An' the Gobble-uns'll git you
 Ef you
 Don't
 Watch
 Out!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

'one time a little girl 'ud allus laugh an' grin,
'make fun of ever' one, an' all her blood-an'-kin;
'onc't when they was "company," an ole folks was
there,

e mocked 'em an' shocked 'em, an' said she didn't
care!

n' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to run an'
hide,

hey was two great big Black Things a-standin' by
her side,

n' they snatched her through the ceilin' 'fore she
knowed what she's about!

n' the Gobble-uns'll git you

Ef you

Don't

Watch

Out!

n' little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,
n' the lampwick sputters, an' the wind goes woo-oo!
n' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is gray,
n' the lightnin'-bugs in dew is all squenched away,—
ou better mind yer parents, an' yer teachers fond an'
dear,

n' churish them 'at loves you, an' dry the orphant's
tear,

n' he'p the pore an' needy ones 'at clusters all about,
r the Gobble-uns'll git you

Ef you

Don't

Watch

Out!

ROBERT UNDERWOOD JOHNSON

1853—

IN his varied and active life as editor, public-spirit citizen and diplomat, having served as the American Ambassador to Italy, Robert Underwood Johnson has had time and enthusiasm to write several volumes of verse, now assembled in his *Collected Poems*.

In 1909, he succeeded the late Richard Watson Gilder as editor of *The Century Magazine*, and he held that post until 1913. He is now the secretary of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Love in Italy

THEY halted at the terrace wall;
Below, the towered city lay;
The valley in the moonlight's thrall
Was silent in a swoon of May.
As hand to hand spoke one soft word
Beneath the friendly ilex-tree,
They knew not, of the flame that stirred,
What part was Love, what Italy.

They knew what makes the moon more bright
Where Beatrice and Juliet are,—
The sweeter perfume in the night,
The lovelier starlight in the star;
And more that glowing hour did prove,
Beneath the sheltering ilex-tree—
That Italy transfigures Love,
As Love transfigures Italy.

ROBERT UNDERWOOD JOHNSON

The Wistful Days

WHAT is there wanting in the Spring?

The air is soft as yesteryear;
The happy nested green is here,
And half the world is on the wing.
The morning beckons, and like balm
Are westward waters blue and calm.
Yet something's wanting in the Spring.

What is it wanting in the Spring?

O April, lover to us all,
What is so poignant in thy thrall
When children's merry voices ring?
What haunts us in the cooing dove
More subtle than the speech of Love?
What nameless lack or loss of Spring?

Let youth go dally with the Spring,
Call her the dear, the fair, the young;
And all her graces ever sung
Let him, once more rehearsing, sing.
They know, who keep a broken tryst,
Till something from the Spring be missed
We have not truly known the Spring.

Browning at Asolo

THIS is the loggia Browning loved,
High on the flank of the friendly town;
These are the hills that his keen eye roved,
The green like a cataract leaping down
To the plain that his pen gave new renown.

ROBERT UNDERWOOD JOHNSON

There to the West what a range of blue!—
The very background Titian drew
To his peerless Loves. O tranquil scene!
Who than thy poet fondlier knew
The peaks and the shore and the lore between?

See! yonder's his Venice—the valiant Spire,
Highest one of the perfect three,
Guarding the others: the Palace choir,
The Temple flashing with opal fire—
Bubble and foam of the sunlit sea.

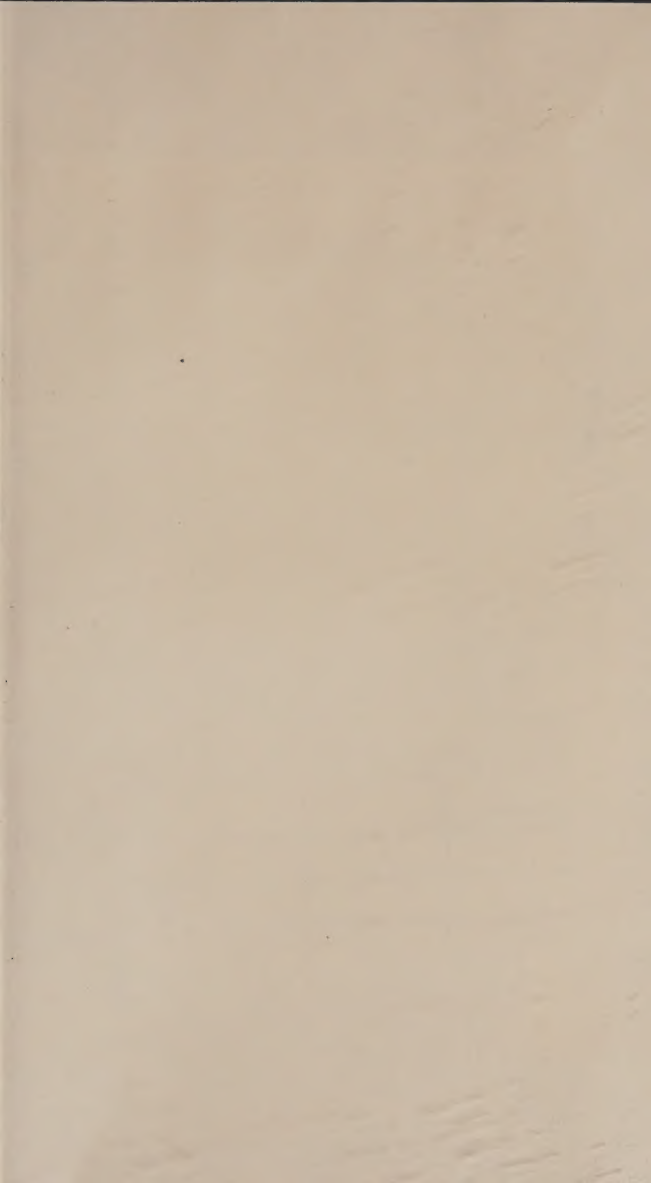
Yesterday he was part of it all—
Sat here, discerning cloud from snow
In the flush of the Alpine afterglow,
Or mused on the vineyard whose wine-stirred ro
Meets in a leafy bacchanal.

Listen a moment—how oft did he!—
To the bells from Fontalto's distant tower
Leading the evening in . . . ah me!
Here breathes the whole soul of Italy
As one rose breathes with the breath of the bowe

Sighs were meant for an hour like this
When joy is keen as a thrust of pain.
Do you wonder the poet's heart should miss
This touch of rapture in Nature's kiss
And dream of Asolo ever again?

"Part of it yesterday," we moan?
Nay, he is part of it now, no fear.
What most we love we are that alone.
His body lies under the Minster stone,
But the love of the warm heart lingers here.

"La Mura," Asolo, June 3, 1892.



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